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CHRONICLE.

IT has been generally understood that Russia would expect to be highly paid for the help she has recently given to China. Months ago we inferred that the Russian terms were extravagant from the fact that they were not made public. A "Times" correspondent in Hong Kong now informs us that Russia has arranged that her Trans-Asian Railway should run from Nertchinsk in Siberia direct to Vladivostock across Chinese territory; secondly, that a branch of this railway should run from Tsitsihar in Siberia to Port Arthur; and thirdly, that Russia should have the right of anchorage for her fleet in Port Arthur. The correspondent speaks of "other commercial advantages" which are still kept secret, but the three concessions specified above are enough for us. As the "Times" says, we cannot allow Russia thus to seize Port Arthur and make it the terminus of the Trans-Asian Railway. Russia would then hold China in fee, and our trade with China would soon cease to exist. Even if we cannot obtain the assistance of Germany we must oppose this plundering; Japan, at all events, would be with us. Lord Salisbury's task is exceedingly difficult, but he will be backed by every Englishman in resisting such monstrous pretensions on the part of Russia.

It seems doubtful whether the reforms which the Sultan so unwillingly offers to his Armenian subjects will do much good. The Turkish Empire resembles a building that is falling to pieces through age and rottenness—repairs are more fatal to it than the quiet passage of years. Disorders in the Asiatic provinces of Turkey appear to be increasing. Disturbances are reported to have broken out at Karasun and in Mudania, while we hear from Odessa that fighting is going on all through the Caucasus between the Armenians and the Turks, and that bands of armed Armenians are leaving their work and passing the Russian frontier in order to fight the Kurds and Turks who are attacking their defenceless compatriots in Turkish Armenia. In the meantime Armenian refugees are arriving daily in Southern Russia, bringing with them harrowing tales of the wrongs they have undergone at the hands of the Turks, and thus bad feeling is growing in intensity on both sides of the frontier. We must be thankful if peace is gradually re-established. In view of the present condition of things no one can deny that Lord Salisbury's prudence only came just in time.

Count Badeni, the new Austrian Prime Minister, seems to be winning for himself golden opinions. His speech in the Reichstag on the 22nd is spoken of as opening a

new era in the domestic history of the Austrian Empire. He is not a parliamentary minister; his Cabinet has been selected outside the Reichsrath; in fact, he may be regarded as the chief of the executive power who is known to possess in a peculiar measure the absolute confidence of the Crown. And this means a great deal in Austria, where the political influence of the Emperor Francis Joseph is continually increasing in proportion as the discord between the various nationalities that compose the Empire grows more pronounced. Yet in spite of the fact that Count Badeni is backed by the personal popularity and the immense power of the Emperor, and that he is to a great extent independent of the Reichsrath, he will have his hands full. He will have to deal at once with the budget for 1896, and he must also consider on what terms he is prepared to renew the compromise with Hungary, which expires in 1897. Furthermore, a measure of electoral reform has been promised, and Count Badeni is pledged to a wide extension of the franchise. And this work presses, for the present Reichsrath comes to an end in 1897. In fine, Count Badeni will have several opportunities of distinguishing himself or of coming to grief within the next two years.

The Venezuelan business is much complicated by the number of parties to the dispute. There are the Imperial Government and the Republic of Venezuela, who are at present in communication through the German Foreign Office. Between Lord Salisbury and Mr. Chamberlain (for in a case of this kind the spheres of our Foreign and Colonial Offices overlap), and Venezuela there comes the government of the colony of British Guiana, and behind Venezuela there looms in the distance the United States with its menacing Monroe doctrine. The immediate subject of quarrel is not the boundary, but the invasion of British territory, the seizure of British property, and the maltreatment of British subjects, as to which, of course, no argument is possible. The boundary question has been dragging on for over half a century, ever since Sir R. Schomburgk's mission in 1840, and in 1886 the British Government made a formal declaration to the effect that no Venezuelan claim to the east of the Schomburgk line would be allowed. Yet in August 1887, in answer to a question in the House of Commons, Sir Henry Holland said that "as Her Majesty's Government have no reason to anticipate any attempt on the part of Venezuela to encroach on the territory claimed by Great Britain, it was not thought necessary to give the Governor specific instructions as to the steps to be taken to protect the boundary." Such was the extraordinary incompetence or ignorance with which Lord Knutsford managed the affairs of the colonies.

Mr. Chamberlain, of course, takes a very different view of his duties as Secretary of State, and he has come into collision with the Government of the colony as to voting the cost of the Maxim guns which he thinks necessary for the protection of the boundary. British Guiana possesses the most curious and antiquated of all our colonial constitutions. The constitution was modified in 1891, and the old College of Electors was abolished. There is now an Executive Council, and the Court of Policy with the Governor at its head, that performs the functions of a legislature except as regards taxation and finance, which are dealt with by the Combined Court. Then there is the College of Financial Representatives, consisting of six members elected by the constituencies for two years. The Combined Court comprises the Court of Policy and the six Financial Representatives, and passes all Tax Ordinances. Like the House of Commons, the Combined Court has the power of raising taxes and of cutting down, though not of increasing, the estimates submitted by the Governor. It is with this Combined Court that Mr. Chamberlain has come into conflict, the sugar planters, according to the "St. James's Gazette," declining to vote for the Maxims. We trust that Mr. Chamberlain will stick to his guns, and that he will presently reform the constitution of British Guiana so as to make it really representative of all classes in the colony, and not of one interest alone.

Although Sir Algernon Borthwick's ascension to the Upper House will create no perceptible void in the Commons, it will necessitate the choosing of a chairman by the Conservative Metropolitan Members. In 1885, when London found herself for the first time possessed of sixty-one Members, Mr. W. H. Smith took the chair at the meetings of the London Conservatives; but after the formation of Lord Salisbury's Government in 1886, Lord Glencorse was elected to that difficult and thankless post. The Metropolitan Unionists are a nullity in the House of Commons, because, though they have twice exceeded the number of fifty, they are profoundly divided both by personal jealousies and a real divergence of interests. Were they Irishmen or Radicals, they would decide the fate of Ministries, and insist on some attention being paid to London. But being what they are, they never have acted and never will act together, for their constituencies want different things, and there is no man of sufficient force of character or brains to awe them into discipline.

Lord Glencorse may be said to have made a good chairman, for he sat and smiled and, occasionally rapping the table, implored his colleagues to get to business. Now his successor has to be chosen; and the question arises, what sort of man do the London Conservative Members want? If they want a chairman with a big house in the West End, who will give dinners and receptions, there would seem to be only two gentlemen eligible for the post: Mr. Burdett-Coutts, and the Hon. F. D. Smith, Member for the Strand. But Mr. Burdett-Coutts is not particularly popular with his colleagues; and "Freddy" Smith is rather too young to keep them in order. There is Mr. Whitmore, who has experience, and is cautious and conciliatory; but then he has no mansion for entertainments. The same remark applies to Mr. Boulnois, who is perhaps the most active and vigilant of all the London Conservatives. Of course, if the union of the Unionists is really complete, and the Liberal wing is going to drop its separate organization, Sir John Lubbock, the Member for London University, has every qualification for the chairmanship: a serene temper, a house in St. James's Square, and a constituency that lets him do what he likes.

The warfare between workman and master is being accepted as an adjunct of our industrial civilization, and we regret this the more at least in regard to the United Kingdom because we had hoped that a recent action of Lord Rosebery would bring arbitration into favour. But there are now nearly 4000 skilled shipbuilders out of work in Belfast, and, if the quarrel is not settled, business will also be suspended on the Clyde, in obedience to the subsisting agreement between employers. It is estimated that if the dispute is not arranged, a population of something like a quarter of a million will

soon be enduring intense poverty. It would be a matter for congratulation, we think, if Mr. Gerald Balfour offered to act as the arbitrator of this quarrel in the Queen's Island yards. His tact and kindness might bring about a friendly arrangement.

In Germany, too, the Agrarian question which seems not only to have split up the Social Democratic party but also to have rendered Dr. Von Bötticher's position almost untenable, is engrossing public attention. The condition of agriculture throughout Germany is falling from bad to worse, and the dispute between the agricultural labourers and the farmers seems almost as bitter as the feelings cherished by the farmers for their rivals in Russia and the United States. In France industrial quarrels are envenomed by political agitators. The Carmaux strike may affect not only the position of a single Minister but the existence of the Ministry. All the Radical Republicans, we hear, are going to vote for the Socialists, in order to censure M. Leygues for having shown partiality to the company in his efforts to maintain order. It might do good if a Ministry were overturned in consequence of such an industrial conflict. In civilized countries the State seems to be abdicating its chief function when it professes itself unable to settle such disputes.

When Mr. Wallace Cochrane-Baillie sat for one of the divisions of St. Pancras, there could be no two opinions as to who was the best-looking man in the House of Commons. Lord Lamington is now going out as Governor of Queensland, where his handsome appearance and charming manners ought to make him popular even with the exacting colonists. It will be remembered that he went out to the States as Mr. George Curzon's best man, but the interest of his appearance at Washington was considerably discounted by the fact that he had the bad taste to get engaged to an English girl before going there. Lord Lamington is not exactly brilliant, but then he does not pretend to be a genius, and nobody is such a general favourite as the modest man of moderate abilities. His lordship has travelled in the East almost as much as Mr. George Curzon, though he has written less about it, which does not prove that he knows less.

From what passed between Sir Joseph Dimsdale and Mr. Benn at Tuesday's meeting of the County Council, it is evident that a measure dealing with the Livery Companies will be brought forward on behalf of that body. There are twelve great Livery Companies and sixty minor companies. The trust and corporate income of these companies was estimated by the Royal Commission which reported in 1884 at between £750,000 and £800,000, and the capital value of their real and personal property was put at fifteen millions sterling. This estimate was based on figures supplied to the Commission for the year 1880, and in the last fifteen years the value of the property, much of which is in London, must have considerably increased, though, as the Commissioners observed, the income was then larger than that of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge with all the colleges therein. The Commission calculated that there were 10,000 "freemen" and 7319 "liverymen," of whom 1500 formed the "Courts" of the Companies. The trust income is £200,000, and the corporate income £550,000, and of this latter £100,000 a year is put down for "entertainments" and £170,000 for "maintenance," i.e. fees to members of the Courts, salaries to officials, and repairs. Altogether, we should say the time has come when the Livery Companies will have to give an account of their stewardship.

The more we know of the case the more unjustifiable appears to be the conduct of Major Lothaire in executing Mr. Stokes. The German explorer Dr. Stuhlmann has just declared that "Mr. Stokes often served the cause of civilization by his trade in arms... he might be more justly accused of love of gain than mischievous enterprises... trade in ivory is inseparable from that in firearms." He points out that the evidence of Stokes's men was utterly untrustworthy, as they "doubtless gave answers which they thought would please their interrogators." Finally, Dr. Stuhlmann gives it as his opinion that Mr. Stokes "was executed because the

Congo Free State feared his commercial competition," and he goes on to assert that "the officials of the Congo Free State do not hesitate to infringe frontier rights, and to attack traders, and to use means which it is better to say *nothing about*, in order to secure for themselves the trade in ivory and india-rubber." The italics are ours.

Furthermore, a correspondent of the "Times" has shown that an "essential element" of the arrangement between the British Government and the Congo Free State was "the right of appeal of any Englishman to the highest Court of the Congo Free State against the decisions of local officials." It is probable, therefore, on the one hand, that Mr. Stokes's faults have been grossly exaggerated, and, on the other hand, it is certain that no matter what his offences may have been, Major Lothaire had not the right to refuse his appeal to the Court at Boma, much less to play both judge and executioner. A murder of this sort, carried out by a man who was peculiarly bound to observe the law upon a man who had voluntarily given himself up, is aggravated by the travesty of a trial. Lothaire committed murder in executing Mr. Stokes, his refusal of the right of appeal is an additional offence, and his mock trial an outrage upon justice.

Who is the present British Ambassador at Madrid? We were under the impression that it was Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, but as that eminent diplomatist is always in London, we must have been misinformed. It is of course possible that our original idea was right, and that some urgent diplomatic crisis is the explanation of Sir Henry's presence in Pall Mall. There is, to be sure, a vacancy at St. Petersburg, caused by the transference of Sir Frank Lascelles to Berlin, and it may be that Sir Henry has just run across Europe to give Lord Salisbury the benefit of his advice as to filling up the post. There is no better *raconteur* than Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, and if he should publish his Reminiscences they will be really interesting. As a public man Sir Henry has always been distinguished by loyalty to his friends and to himself. The late Professor Thorold Rogers used to call him the Wandering Jew of diplomacy.

Sir Edward Clarke probably makes more speeches in the year than any other living man. This is a very dangerous amusement, and at last the too fluent orator, "*torrentior Isæo*," has given himself away. Anything weaker than Sir Edward's answer to Mr. Manisty it is impossible to imagine. The President of the Law Society had stated that eminent counsel sometimes took fees for cases in which they failed to appear. Sir Edward Clarke indignantly denied the charge at a City banquet—which he needn't have done—and, lo and behold! he had himself done the very thing, the mere imputation of which so excited his after-dinner anger a few days ago. The facts are not disputed. He failed to appear in Lord Shaftesbury's appeal, and he took the cheque. It is no answer to say that he saw his clients afterwards, and they did not ask that the cheque should be returned. Clients are not in the habit of demanding cheques from leading Queen's Counsel in their own chambers. One can faintly imagine what Sir Charles Russell would have looked like or what he would have said if anybody had asked him in his chambers to return a cheque.

Who will henceforth dispute the claim of Mr. Norman to be the first of English travelling correspondents? In the course of a single interview he drew from Prince Nicholas of Montenegro a very generous tribute of admiration for Mr. Gladstone. As the friend of nations rightly struggling to be free, Mr. Gladstone's name, it seems, is engraved in the Prince's heart of hearts without, however, causing any functional disorder. The compliment appeared in due course in the "Daily Chronicle," and was there duly answered by a letter from Mr. Gladstone. At the very beginning the late Liberal leader says: "Prince Nicholas seems to be worthy of the old Vladikas. I cannot say more." Nor can we; the name of Vladika is enough. And then the old man eloquent continues: "In my deliberate opinion the traditions of Montenegro, now committed to his Highness as a sacred

trust, exceed in glory those of Marathon and Thermopylæ, and *all* the war traditions of the world." And yet it appears no one except the late Professor Freeman knew anything about Montenegro and its traditions, and it may safely be asserted that when men think of great rulers who, according to Plutarch, are those who have made small States into great ones, they will think of Pericles, and the Prince of Orange, and Elizabeth, and not of any of the Vladikas.

The death of Mr. Henry Reeve, the editor of the "Edinburgh Review," has followed closely on that of Sir William Smith, the editor of the "Quarterly." Both men were octogenarians but here the likeness between them ends. In scholarship and amiability, in the powers that command esteem and in the graces that secure affection, Sir William Smith was far superior to his rival. There was a good deal that was both shallow and arrogant in Mr. Henry Reeve. His knowledge of French and German gave him a real understanding of Continental politics, upon which he frequently wrote in the "Edinburgh." But except in this specialty his knowledge was curiously superficial. There is a story told of an encounter between Mr. Henry Reeve and Carlyle, which is characteristic both of the dogmatic fluency of the whilom contributor to the "Times" and of Carlyle's contempt for loud-voiced mediocrity. Mr. Reeve had been holding forth as was his wont all through a dinner, speaking loudly, and from the eminence of his great height, upon topic after topic. In the middle of one of these speeches Carlyle was seen to look at him curiously, while muttering in an undertone, with the accents of half-pitying contempt, "*Puir auld fule*."

In all Colonial matters the "Times" seems determined to turn itself into the mere organ of the Chartered Company. We have recently set forth in these columns, in an article on the Bechuanaland Railway, the negotiations between Mr. Rhodes and Lord Ripon, which ended in Lord Ripon's promising to hand over to the Chartered Company the mineral and other rights in the countries of a dozen native chiefs, and we put forward the various reasons which had induced Khama, Bathoen, and Sebele to come over to England to order to protest against this—"transfer," as the "Times" calls it. We laid stress upon the fact that the decision rested with Mr. Chamberlain, at least in so far as he is not tied by the decisions of his predecessor. The "Times," however, does not think it beneath its dignity to address scarcely veiled threats to Khama and the others for their stubborn dislike to be plundered. It says: "... the Company (the British South Africa) has shown by the manner of its dealing with the lesser chiefs that it is prepared to make all reasonable concessions, and Khama will be well advised to profit by the conjunction of circumstances which tend at the present moment to create for him an opportunity that may not recur. When, a few years hence, the railway has been completed to Bulawayo and the administration of the Company has been extended on his south-eastern frontier, the position will evidently be much less favourable for the negotiation of the terms on which he or his successors may find themselves compelled to accept a transfer that will have become practically inevitable."

Mr. Asquith's resolve to practice at the bar brings about a reversal of his relations with Sir Robert Reid. "Bob" Reid has often been led in the House of Commons by the late Home Secretary: it will now be the ex-Attorney-General's turn to lead his former chief, and to swear at him if he goes wrong, for Bob is sometimes very irritable in Court. But as gratitude is a sense of favours to come, no doubt Mr. Asquith will be let down gently by his learned leader. The late Home Secretary has accepted a brief in the Langtry jewel case. The case will turn on the question whether the bank was a gratuitous bailee or a bailee for reward. Obviously if you pay a man to look after your property he is bound to take greater care of it than if he receives it to oblige you. If the bank took charge of the jewels merely because Mrs. Langtry kept her account there, nothing but the grossest negligence will make them liable. But if Mrs. Langtry paid them to take care of the casket, a slight degree of carelessness would make them liable. Mr. Asquith will no

doubt return to the study of "Smith's Leading Cases" with all the gusto of a rhetorician.

The new Bishop of Hereford opened his first diocesan conference on Wednesday with an oration which must have considerably astonished even those of his hearers who came fully prepared to hear something startling from Lord Rosebery's nominee. For the first time in the history of the Church of England, her spoliation has been openly advocated by one of her own prelates. Dr. Percival is at liberty, if he pleases, to call Church Disestablishment by the name of Church Reform, although the connection between the two processes is not very clear; but he was guilty of a gross offence against decency—to say no worse—in airing views which he must have known would be extremely distasteful to his audience, and which lay altogether outside the bounds which it was proper for him to observe in addressing them. The right reverend gentleman has perhaps not yet quite forgotten the pedagogue in the prelate; but his want of tact augurs ill for peace in the diocese of Hereford.

The mode in which the Bishop suggests that the spoils should be exacted is certainly novel. He thinks "the amounts due from the Church to other denominations" might be raised "in the shape of a deduction from incomes, to be levied with the same scale of exemptions as is now applied to the income-tax." It must have been amusing to watch the faces of the surrounding clergy when it was calmly proposed that they should hand over a portion of their incomes to the apostles of dissent in their respective parishes, in order, forsooth, to assist those worthies in maintaining what is sometimes irreverently nicknamed the "opposition shop." If the Bishop has the honesty to act up to his convictions, let him by all means distribute among any dissenters whom he may desire to benefit as much as he pleases of his own income of £4200 a year; or, better still, let him resign an office which his opinions evidently render him incapable of holding conscientiously. The Church has shown already that she can very well defend herself when attacked, but she wants no traitors in the camp.

The attempt to establish a Bourbon and Catholic Court at Sofia has finally collapsed. From the first a hopeful experiment it was not. The swineherds and small traders of Bulgaria have remaining among them fewer traditions of class and social caste than any other white people on earth. Such feudal families as they once had were long ago crushed out by the Turk, or humbled by poverty to the common lot. It is a race made up entirely of peasants. The acquisition of a Parmese Princess was wasted upon them. They were not impressed by her tremendous pedigree. They laughed at the airs she put on, and said rude things about the Chamberlains and Gold-Sticks-in-Waiting, and other ceremonial paraphernalia which she set up in their primitive capital. Now the poor lady has been compelled to abandon her most cherished notion, that of rearing her son in her own faith. The Prince Boris is to be baptized into the Orthodox Greek Church, his mother's tears and protests notwithstanding, and it is by no means sure that even this final act of abasement before Russia will save her husband his throne. Under these distressing circumstances, it would not be surprising if her seven younger sisters decided to eschew matrimony altogether.

The position of things on the London County Council is growing decidedly serious for Londoners. After the tie at the last municipal election the Progressives can just manage, by the aid of their co-opted aldermen, to stale-mate the Moderates. Thus the new street from Holborn to the Strand has been hung up; and now the water question has been placed in a hopelessly ridiculous position. The Progressives certainly have the platonic satisfaction of recording a resolution that the Council should be the water authority; but considering that their narrow majority is made up of non-elected aldermen, Mr. Chaplin will be justified in consigning the resolution to his waste-paper basket. It was one of Mr. Ritchie's mistakes that non-elective aldermen should have been created, and the present deadlock at Spring Gardens illustrates the evil of their existence.

KHAMA AND THE CHARTERED COMPANY.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN will be back in England in a few days. One of his first engagements at the Colonial Office is the settlement of the question between Khama, Bathoen and Sebele, and the Chartered Company—or, rather, between these chiefs and Mr. Rhodes. Ever since Khama quitted his country of Bamangwato there have been constant attempts on the part of Mr. Rhodes's agents to prejudice the issue, to represent Khama as having made up his differences with the Chartered Company, and to point to the annexation of Khama's country and the Bechuanaland Protectorate by that Corporation as a foregone conclusion. It is astonishing to find even the "Times" repeating these innuendoes of the Chartered Company. A fortnight since, that paper, in a special article, stated that Khama had changed his opinions since his arrival in this country, and had decided, under certain reservations as to land, liquor laws, and tribal rights, to place himself under the protection of Mr. Rhodes's Company. How the "Times" could have published that statement—a statement calculated in the strongest way to prejudice Khama's rights—without ascertaining the facts from the mouth of the chief himself, it is impossible to say. But Khama very quickly made it apparent that the "Times" spoke without authority. He stated publicly that there was no truth in the article in question; that he had since his arrival in this country entered into no sort of negotiations with the Chartered Company; and that he has now, as he has always had, the strongest possible objection to be taken from the Queen's protection and absorbed by the British South Africa Company. Mr. Rhodes and his friends are adepts in the art of impressing their views upon statements made by the South African Press and the cable agencies; but it is not a little astonishing to find a journal like the "Times" becoming as the softest of wax in their fingers.

If, however, the Chartered Company expects to influence Mr. Chamberlain by these methods it is vastly mistaken. Mr. Chamberlain has already made a strong pronouncement of his views on Khama's country and the Protectorate. He stated in August, just before the close of the Session, in reply to a question on the subject, that he "was going to do nothing; that was to say, the Protectorate for the present would remain in exactly the same position as it had been in hitherto."

Within the last few days a strange move is reported concerning this very Bechuanaland Protectorate. It was announced by cable—no doubt a Rhodes cable—on the 18th inst. that the High Commissioner had issued a proclamation placing Montsioa's and Ikanneng's territories in the Protectorate under the administration of the British South Africa Company. That is an extraordinary announcement. It means that territories *south* of Khama, Sebele, and Bathoen have been handed over to the Chartered Company. On the face of Mr. Chamberlain's absolute statement in August last, it would seem that this is another move in Mr. Rhodes's game of brag, and that his friend, Sir Hercules Robinson, the High Commissioner, has been prevailed upon to take this step without reference to the home Government. It seems incredible, but, knowing Mr. Rhodes and his methods as we know them, the thing is not impossible. We believe that this last development is a manoeuvre designed by Mr. Rhodes at this moment to prejudice the claims of Khama and his fellow chiefs by representing that a part of the Bechuanaland Protectorate is already in the hands of the Chartered Company. Ikanneng controls a small piece of country to the eastward of Bathoen, who, by the way, always alleges that Ikanneng is his subject. Poor old Montsioa's piece of land in the Protectorate is quite a small patch between the Molopo and Bathoen's southern border. The bulk of Montsioa's country lies south of the Molopo, and since 1885 has formed part of British Bechuanaland. As Montsioa has already protested against annexation to the Cape Colony, it is in the highest degree improbable that he has willingly consented to absorption by the Chartered Company. It is a misfortune that at this juncture the High Commissioner for South Africa is Sir Hercules Robinson, an intimate friend of Mr. Rhodes and practically his creature. Sir Hercules' appointment, it will be remembered,

when made by the late Government, was strongly protested against in the House of Commons.

The mission of Khama, Sebele, and Bathoen is a very simple one. These chiefs govern, and govern extremely well, an immense tract of country almost approaching in extent the combined area of Matabele- and Mashonaland. Khama, whose country alone is larger than England, may be cited as one of the finest characters and greatest reformers that Africa has ever produced. His people have during the twenty years of his reign made immense strides in moral and material prosperity. Khama's country, indeed, is now one of the most prosperous and best-ordered States in all South Africa, not excepting the territories governed by white men. The Bamangwato under Khama's rule are now well to do, well armed—they were respected even by the Matabele—and are making rapid progress in civilization. Slavery, witchcraft, and European drink have been abolished; even at far distant cattle posts children are taught to read and write; wherever the Englishman goes in Khama's country he is sure of a kindly welcome, and finds peace and good order. What Khama has done for British progress in South Africa it is impossible to overestimate. The Blue-books of the last ten years, the writings of every traveller and sportsman who has recorded his impressions, bear eloquent testimony to the immense and disinterested services rendered by this excellent chief. During the early years of the Chartered Company, the help of Khama, at that time willing and anxious to befriend the Company in every possible way, was inestimable. That aid has been poorly repaid since, and is now made light of by Mr. Rhodes and his admirers; but Mr. Selous in his recent book has placed on record his opinion of Khama's services. He says, speaking of the advance into Mashonaland: "It is my belief that had not Khama come to our assistance at this juncture, not a coloured boy would have crossed the Tuli, and the expedition in that case would have been lamentably crippled. I have never seen Khama's aid acknowledged or even referred to, and I therefore take this opportunity of stating that in my opinion he, by his hearty co-operation, in every way and whenever called upon, with the leaders of the expedition to Mashonaland, not only rendered inestimable services to the British South Africa Company, but earned the gratitude of all Englishmen who are interested in the expansion of South Africa. Mr. Selous himself is a strong supporter of the Chartered Company. But he is a man of transparent honesty; he has known Khama for more than twenty years, and he is not at all the kind of person to see the chief slighted and thrown overboard as soon as his services can be dispensed with.

Khama, Bathoen, and Sebele, on hearing that Mr. Rhodes had stated in the Cape House of Assembly that their territories were to be handed over to the Chartered Company, have come to England to protest in the strongest possible manner against such an absorption. They are perfectly calm upon the point, but it is unquestionable that they are determined by every legitimate means in their power to remain under the protection of the Queen, and to resist annexation by Mr. Rhodes.

And now what does the Chartered Company want with the countries of these three chiefs? They are not rich territories, and the Company has already as much upon its hands as it can possibly deal with for the next twenty years. The plain fact of the case is this. Mr. Rhodes wishes to eliminate utterly, and at once, the last remains of the Imperial control in his portion of South Africa. With the absorption of these territories there would be no place—except in Basutoland and Zululand, countries beyond the present scope of his operations—for the Imperial factor. But in our judgment it would be the height of folly just now—quite apart from the rights and expectations of these chiefs themselves—to withdraw the Imperial control from North Bechuanaland. Mr. Rhodes, as the "Cape Times" has well pointed out, needs a great deal of watching. Already—quite apart from his vast financial power—he has immense territories and authority within his grip. His rule in South Africa is autocratic; his power is in fact greater than that of any European Sovereign, the Tsar of Russia only excepted. His fingers are in so many financial pies, his private interests are so entangled with his public duties,

that it is impossible for him to do clean and even-handed justice to the congeries of countries and interests now under his control. Let us wait a few years and see how the Rhodes monopoly works for the good of British South Africans before entrusting this man, strong and able as he undoubtedly is, with further territories. We believe that Mr. Chamberlain, who is a keen and far-sighted politician, will decline to be "rushed" by the Chartered Company, and will hesitate to withdraw the Imperial protection from the countries of Khama, Sebele, and Bathoen. In any case we advise these chiefs, and Khama especially, to stand firm. They have a very large section of the British public behind them, and the Chartered Company will never be permitted to seize their countries against the will of themselves and their tribesmen. And in the case of Khama especially, after all he has done for England in South Africa, it would be a shameful act to deliver him into the hands of Mr. Rhodes, who has never liked him, and who can now be looked upon in no other light than that of his bitter enemy.

THE RAILWAY COMMISSION.

THE long wrangle over rates between the railway companies, the public, the Board of Trade, and Parliament, which began in 1881 and is still unsettled, is far too complicated a subject for the limits of an article such as this. It is with the tribunal established by Parliament for the settlement of differences arising between the companies and the public, and the portion of the report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1893 which deals with that tribunal, that we are here concerned. The Railway Commission was appointed by the Act of 1873, and consisted of three members, of whom one was to be "of experience on railways," and another a member of the legal profession. The President of that Commission was Sir Frederick Peel; the railway member was the late Mr. Price, who had great experience; and the legal member was Mr., now Sir Alexander, Miller, Q.C., a Chancery barrister and a relative of the late Lord Cairns. The Commission was appointed for five years: after the expiration of that period it was renewed from time to time till 1888, when the Railway and Canal Traffic Act was passed. By that Act a Judge of the High Court was appointed to act as *ex-officio* President of the Commission, Mr. Miller, the legal member, being compensated by his appointment as Legal Member of the Viceroy of India's Council. The two lay members were reappointed, but on the death of Mr. Price in 1891, Lord Cobham was appointed in his place as "a member with experience on railways." On this change the report of the Select Committee grimly remarks: "It has resulted that, as now constituted, the Commission has no member who has had any experience in commercial affairs and who is specially acquainted with the requirements of traders." The duties of the Commission are to give effect to the provisions of the Railway and Canal Traffic Acts of 1854, 1873, 1888, 1891, and 1892 with regard to facilities of traffic, preferential rates, terminal charges, through rates, and differences which would otherwise go to arbitration. The Commission can only act upon the complaint of individual or associated traders, and it issues orders or injunctions to the different companies, to afford certain facilities of traffic in one place, to desist from undue preference in another, or to fix a through rate in a third, as the case may be. These orders have all the effect of orders of the High Court, and disobedience on the part of the companies may be visited by a writ of attachment for contempt. It is not the least remarkable point about this extraordinary tribunal that two of its members differ as to the essential character of its jurisdiction. Sir Frederick Peel thinks that the Commission has power not only to say that a rate is preferential or excessive, but to fix the reduced amount. Mr. Justice Wills, the President, thinks that the Commission has no power to fix a rate, but only to order a company to desist from charging a preferential or unreasonable rate. But this is a point of law which it is not our province to discuss: it illustrates, however, the muddle in which sooner or later such a tribunal must be landed. Every case must be heard by all three Commissioners sitting together, though interlocutory business may be dealt with by a single Commissioner; and whenever any question of law arises, the opinion of

the President prevails. The President of the Commission may be any one of the *puisse* Judges to whom the Lord Chancellor assigns the duty: the Judge is withdrawn from his ordinary work in the courts or on circuit, and gets no extra pay for sitting on the Railway Commission. The first President was, as has been mentioned, Mr. Justice Wills; and at present the duty is assigned to Mr. Justice Collins. The lay members, Sir Frederick Peel and Lord Cobham, receive a salary of £3000 a year each, with a pension which is fixed, we understand, on the same scale as the pensions of Judges of the High Court of Justice.

That Sir Frederick Peel and Lord Cobham should be appointed to posts for which they have no special qualifications, but for which they are paid £3000 a year with a pension attached, does not surprise us in the least. There are certain families in this country who have a prescriptive right to all the best offices, and of this category the families of Peel and Lyttelton stand at the head. But surely the public has a right to demand that its favourites shall do something for their money. But what is done by the Railway Commissioners? The Railway and Canal Traffic Act of 1873, which created the Commission, enacts with unconscious irony that "The Commissioners shall devote the whole of their time to the performance of their duties under this Act." According to a return, which was laid upon the table of the House of Commons in 1892, the Railway Commissioners sat in 1889 on fifteen days, in 1890 on twenty-eight days, in 1891 on twenty-eight days, and in 1892 on twenty-two days, giving an average of twenty-three days' work in the year. According to the Commissioners' own reports, in the first year of their existence they heard eleven cases, in the second year twenty-eight cases, in the third year nineteen cases, and in the fourth year seventeen cases, or an average of eighteen cases a year. Three thousand a year and a pension for sitting twenty-three days and hearing eighteen cases a year! That is at the rate of £166 a case, or £130 a sitting, involving four and a half hours' work, or, to bring it down to its lowest terms, rather more than £28 17s. an hour. It may be that there are men whose work is worth such a figure; but we confess that in our opinion they would require to be possessed of some very special qualifications, such, for instance, as very rare expert knowledge. With all due deference to Sir Frederick Peel and Lord Cobham, and with every desire not to be unduly hard on them, we fail to detect in them any rare or special qualifications whatever. Lord Cobham was appointed to succeed Mr. Price as the railway member; but what is his special "experience on railways"? That friendly chronicler, Burke, informs us that his lordship was a Land Commissioner for England and Wales from 1881 to 1889; that he sat in Parliament for East Worcestershire from 1868 to 1874; that he is High Steward of Bewdley; and that he is a trustee for the National Portrait Gallery. This would not seem to be the training of a railway expert; but, no doubt, his lordship picked up his special knowledge of rates in the yeomanry, for the same authority informs us that he was, or is, the colonel of the Worcestershire Yeomanry. Sir Frederick Peel's case is even worse, for he is neither the legal member nor the railway member, and the House of Commons Committee are rude enough to say, as we quoted above, that he has no experience of commercial matters and no special acquaintance with the requirements of traders. If he is neither the railway man, nor the legal man, nor the commercial man, in Heaven's name whose man is he? Frankly, we think that the fault of Sir Frederick Peel and Lord Cobham is the same as that of the Dutch in matters of commerce, and consists in "giving too little and taking too much." Evidently the public think so too, for although the Acts of 1891 and 1892 amounted, as Sir Henry Oakley said, to "a revolution," and one company alone had to recalculate 13,000,000 rates, the traders have left the Commissioners severely alone for three hundred and forty-two days in the year. Sir Albert Rollit calculated that each sitting of the Commission cost the public from £400 to £800. Is it worth the money? It is, of course, a serious question whether there should be any such tribunal as the Railway Commission at all. Sir Courtenay Boyle, in his evidence, seemed to lean towards a mediatory or concilia-

tory body, which should negotiate and suggest, but which should have no power to enforce its decisions. This, of course, would involve the abolition of the Commission, which sits with all the powers of a Court of Record. Mr. Justice Wills, on the other hand, though he gave his evidence with reluctance and under pressure, is of opinion that a single Judge, occasionally assisted by assessors, as in the Admiralty Court, would be a better tribunal than the present one. This would, at all events, save the public the salaries of the Commissioners and the Registrar, though the learned Judge did not think it would diminish the costs of the suitors, a burthen which he regards, with professional complacency, as unavoidable. But the Railway Commission, as at present constituted and as at present paid, is doomed by the concluding words of the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, from which we quote the following weighty extracts:

"Your Committee have received complaints as to the Railway Commission. These have been directed in part to its constitution, and to the absence of any member on it who is specially acquainted with the interests and requirements of traders, and in part to the heavy costs entailed by proceedings before it.

"It appears to have been expected in 1888 that the work of the Commission, theretofore very light, would be greatly increased by the number of additional questions which were submitted for its decision. The Commission was made permanent. Provision was also made for the Commission to hold sittings in Ireland and Scotland in order to hear cases in those countries; and in such cases an Irish or Scotch Judge respectively was to take the place of the English Judge as President.

"The experience of the last five years has not realized these expectations. Very few cases have been brought before the Commission, and the number of days on which its members have been engaged in court has not averaged more than twenty-three in each year. It has been alleged that this has been partly due to the uncertainty arising from the inquiries into, and the subsequent legislation as to maximum rates and other questions affecting railways. It has also been alleged that the Conciliation Clause of the Act of 1888 has given satisfaction to traders, and has arrested many complaints which would otherwise have gone before the Commission. The fear of costs has also, it is said, deterred traders from prosecuting cases before the Commission.

"However that may be, your Committee cannot but feel that it will be difficult to justify the continuance of the Commission, as at present constituted. The traders consider it not sufficiently commercial and too much regulated by the procedure of the High Court, and they also hold that it is hardly necessary to take a Judge from the High Court to preside.

"Your Committee think that one of the members of the Commission should be experienced in trade. They are also of opinion that the appointment of the Commissioners should be open to revision from time to time, and should not necessarily carry a pension."

We cannot repress a feeling of lively curiosity as to whether a Government, with plenty of time and a large majority at its disposal, will deal with this flagrant job, or whether they will allow it to continue because the Commissioners happen to belong to powerful families.

THE TRUTH AT LAST ABOUT ARMENIA!

IT is almost a maxim with all true philosophers that rumours and hearsay of every kind are either wholly false or grossly exaggerated. There is no more thorough philosopher than the Turk; and a remarkable exemplification of the wisdom of believing nothing that one is told has just reached us from the City of the Golden Horn. For some months past, the sympathies of the peoples of Europe have been more or less exercised by heartrending accounts of the most fearful atrocities, alleged to have been perpetrated in the Armenian provinces of Turkey. More recently, there have been graphic narratives of a series of free fights with revolver and bayonet in the streets of the capital. It is, of course, only an additional proof, if proof were needed, of the surprising credulity of mankind, that these reports have to some extent been believed, as well

by Governments as by individuals, and that the Press of Europe has been led into hasty denunciations of supposed barbarities; but perhaps the most astonishing circumstance of any is that all this while, as now appears, the inhabitants of Constantinople itself have been in complete ignorance of the whole matter! The Turkish journals, with a dignity which is beyond praise, have hitherto maintained silence in the midst of the fulminations of their Western contemporaries; but even Oriental forbearance has its limits, and, now that foolish or unscrupulous people are actually setting it about that a miserable coalition of Giaour States has forced the hand of the Commander of the Faithful, the "Sabah," for one, evidently thinks that the time has arrived to declare the truth.

"Une question," we read (according to a French translation), "a surgi depuis quelque temps sous le nom de question arménienne." Could more convincing proof be desired than is contained in this simple sentence of the nonsense of the statements with which lying foreign correspondents have deluged the Press of Europe? Is this the language that any journal, in or out of Christendom, would address to its readers, if they had been spending the last fortnight in endeavouring to solve the question referred to by cutting one another's throats? "All kinds of absurd rumours," continues the "Sabah," "have been circulated by interested and malevolent persons, while the European Press has endeavoured to give a colour of truth to imaginary descriptions and fantastic reports. . . . The Armenians know," of course, "that for centuries they have lived and prospered under the protection of the Imperial Government, and have been the constant objects of its benevolence, and they are therefore ever grateful and remain staunch in their fidelity." Unhappily, the deeds of a few members of that community, "who have not sufficient perspicacity to distinguish between good and evil," have "afforded a pretext for the most preposterous comments." These persons "would obviously resort to absurd language in order to give publicity to their schemes, and this would find an echo in some of the more ill-informed or interested of the European papers." When one reads this simple explanation of the whole affair, one cannot but feel indignation against those who for their own base purposes have trifled with our sentiments for so long.

"As to the real situation," adds the "Sabah," "it is as follows: His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, whose constant desire has always been to carry out reforms adapted to the requirements of circumstances, and calculated to secure the wellbeing of his subjects and to give the fullest expansion to the prosperity of his Empire, has, in order to give another proof of his paternal feelings for all his subjects, decided that reforms shall be introduced into all the provinces of the Empire, and first of all in the provinces of Anatolia." The "Ikdám," too, another Turkish journal, points out that the Sultan "does not desire to make any distinctions among his subjects; he wishes to see them all happy and prosperous. In this he follows in the footsteps of his predecessors—his illustrious father and uncle." So far so good; but the "Ikdám" goes on to say that "what must be done is to modify existing laws in accordance with the exigencies of the epoch (pour répondre aux exigences de l'époque actuelle)." The choice of the last phrase seems to us unfortunate. We fear that the unscrupulous schemers and journals already mentioned may still persist in hinting that the Sultan's action has been due to external pressure rather than to his inherited magnanimity. Mr. Cly, we recollect, emphatically denied having been kicked down stairs, but admitted that he had been kicked at the top of the stairs and had then fallen down of his own accord. There are persons of coarse minds to whom this seems a distinction without a difference, and it is therefore to be regretted that the "Ikdám" should have left room for any doubt as to the nature of the "exigencies" by which his Imperial Majesty has been influenced. For our own part, let us hasten to assure our contemporary, we are in no doubt whatever.

Whether the "reforms" about which so much has been said will have the happy result which the Sultan anticipates, or indeed any result at all, is much more questionable. When things are already going on as well as can possibly be expected in a mundane state of

existence, it is difficult, of course, for even the most benevolent and paternal of monarchs to improve them. But for the time being, at any rate, the fuss is over; and the True Believer is once more free to smoke his hubble-bubble in peace, and to dismiss with a deprecatory gesture the anxious problem of Western excitability.

THE VALLEY OF KASHMÍR.*

ALL those Englishmen for whom the founding, development, and permanence of our world-wide Empire have an absorbing interest, and who are anxious to understand both the reasons of our success and the solidity of the foundations on which it rests, would do well to study the story of the regeneration of Kashmir, which has just been told by Mr. Walter Lawrence, Settlement Commissioner of the Kashmir and Jammu State. Here, those who run may read, clearly and fully, how the heaven of honest and fair dealing mixed by the hand of one Englishman with the mass of old world tyranny and apathy, has leavened the whole lump, and brought to one of the most misgoverned countries in the world a promise of future happiness. No romance in which imaginary sorrows distress the gentle heart can compare in interest with the Kashmir history of to-day, in which is recorded the slow and sure methods by which the population of this beautiful valley has been taught confidence in the good intentions of their rulers and to feel that their lives and honour and property are at last secure. It is impossible to speak of what has been accomplished in a few years as altogether and finally assured. But with the completion of the Land Revenue Settlement and the authoritative record of all rights in land, it seems reasonable to believe that Kashmir can never again fall back into that slough of corrupt maladministration which was the despair of all those who were connected with it a few years ago. Prosperity is returning to the valley, which had been depopulated by the famine of 1878; land which had become almost valueless is now eagerly sought after; cultivation is rapidly extending, and the villages are showing signs of rapidly increasing wealth. The system of forced labour has been abolished; the peasant is allowed to reap where he has sown, and greedy officials, with soldiers at their back, no longer dispute with him the share of the State in his harvest. Looking back over the operations of the British Government, directly in its own territory and indirectly in native States, by precept, encouragement, and example, I can remember no more striking instance of the beneficent change which may be effected in the fortunes of a country by wise and liberal measures of administration than has been wrought in Kashmir by the Land Revenue Settlement of Mr. Lawrence. A similar reform, equally advantageous to the people, was inaugurated in Bhopal some years ago, when Colonel H. Ward was appointed Minister to Her Highness the Begum, whose unscrupulous husband had impoverished and well nigh ruined the State; but the incapacity of the officiating Agent of the Governor-General at Indore caused the failure of the interesting experiment. In Kashmir, however, Mr. Lawrence was fortunate in gaining and maintaining the friendship and confidence of the Maharaja Pratáb Singh, and was energetically supported by the British Resident and the Foreign Office. His success has been conspicuous, and the regeneration of Kashmir, which is largely due to his intelligent and unceasing exertions, adds a new lustre to the records of the Indian Civil Service, and fresh honour to a name which in the last generation was the most famous in British India. Nor should a cordial tribute of praise and respect be withheld from the Maharaja who, by applying to the British Government for the services of a competent Settlement officer, and by thoroughly and loyally supporting him against the obstruction and opposition of his own officials, has shown qualities of judgment and consistency which are rare in Indian princes, and which must have surprised those who have been accustomed to proclaim Maharaja Pratáb Singh one of the most apathetic and incompetent of rulers. But the evidence of this volume is amply sufficient to rehabilitate him, and those who desire to see Kashmir prosperous under a native

* "The Valley of Kashmir." By Walter R. Lawrence, I.C.S., C.I.E., Settlement Commissioner, Kashmir and Jammu State. Oxford University Press Warehouse: Henry Frowde. 1895.

prince, will rejoice that so great reforms have been effected, not only with the consent but with the warm encouragement of the Maharaja. I have been associated with the conduct of the relations of the British Government with the Kashmir State for so many years that I can thoroughly appreciate the all but insuperable difficulties which the Maharaja must have experienced in shaking himself free from the control of the most case-hardened, rapacious, and heartless bureaucracy with which any native State has ever been cursed, and in following the wise and statesmanlike counsels of his English adviser. In Mr. Lawrence's book a full account will be found of the Brahman Pundits, who for some generations have formed the official class in Kashmir. Exceedingly clever men of business, astute and polished in manners, they were altogether without sympathy for the Mohammedan peasantry, whom they considered mere beasts of burthen, without rights, created alone to enrich them and their master. Until their power was broken, no useful reforms could be carried out in Kashmir. Their system of government was no more intelligent or beneficent than the operations of a flight of locusts, and successive rulers, through apathy and superstition, had been mere ciphers in their hands.

The English poet who has perhaps written more economical nonsense than any of his tuneful tribe declares:

"How small, of all that human hearts endure,

That part which laws or kings can cause or cure."

It might with greater truth be asserted, with Kashmir as an illustration, that, with the exception of those private sorrows which are common to all humanity, misgovernment and oppression, the denial of justice, the tyranny of the strong, the criminal weakness or greed of the ruler, are the direct cause of the greater part of earthly misery; and certainly these have for many years past turned the paradise of Kashmir into a hell. Even those calamities which seem outside human control—the famine of 1877-78, which destroyed a third of the population of the valley; the epidemics of small-pox and cholera, which should be altogether unknown in so healthy a climate—originated in, or their worst effects were directly produced by, neglect and misgovernment. The most ordinary regard for the laws of decency and sanitation, and the cleansing of the plague-spots of Srinagar and the larger towns and villages, would make cholera an impossibility. The worst effects of the famine were caused by the absence of any cart-road which could convey grain from the plain country into the valley, by the rapacity of the officials, who robbed the peasantry of their scanty harvest in order to store and sell it, at famine prices, for their own profit, and by the prohibition of all emigration. The tyrants knew that if their victims once escaped to the Punjab they would never return to sow a harvest which they were not allowed to enjoy, or to weave, for a starvation wage, the beautiful shawls which once delighted the ladies of London and Paris, who knew not the misery and degradation which the manufacture entailed. The trade is now practically dead. It did not survive the Franco-German war of 1870, and the fashion has changed. The demand for shawls from the courts of Indian princes has not been sufficient to sustain the trade, and most of the looms are silent. Even the valuable shawls which represent the annual tribute to the Queen-Empress are taken from the unsaleable stores of the State. The shawl-weavers, delicate and unhealthy, from the sedentary nature of their calling and their grinding poverty, died in great numbers during the famine, and the survivors have taken to the manufacture of carpets, to which they have brought their marvellous, hereditary genius for design and colouring, and which will probably become as famous in Europe as was the shawl-weaving of the past.

Mr. Lawrence's volume covers the whole life and history of Kashmir. It is the first time that a complete or adequate account of this beautiful country has been written, for the interesting travels of Vigne were but the hasty impressions of an intelligent tourist, while the more detailed account of Mr. Frederick Drew, who was for many years in the service of the Kashmir State, was chiefly confined to the southern district of Jammu, and the northern and outlying provinces to which he was virtually banished by the jealousy of the Pundits. They could not endure that he should obtain any knowledge

of the valley which was their own preserve, and their influence was such that the Maharaja Ranbir Singh himself was persuaded to reside at Jammu, a hot, unhealthy town on the Punjab border, and was but rarely allowed to visit his beautiful mountain capital.

But although Mr. Lawrence's book contains all the information which is ordinarily found in gazetteers regarding the ancient and modern history of the country, the flora and fauna, the social life, religion, and occupations of the people, it has none of the dullness which is associated with such works, which are useful for reference but are avoided by the discriminating reader. On the contrary, the pages of his book are instinct with life and interest, and his polished and restrained style shows that his literary ability is in no way inferior to his administrative capacity. The volume has been issued by the Oxford University Press, which has so much distinguished itself of late years by an intelligent and patriotic interest in the history of our Eastern Empire, and both in the printing and illustrations the Oxford Press well maintains the high standard of excellence which it has set up.

It may well be hoped that the attention of English travellers, capitalists, and even colonists, may be attracted to the Valley of Kashmir, than which there is no district in the world more lovely or more full of varied and engrossing interest.

LEPEL GRIFFIN.

IDEAL WIVES.

OF all branches of criticism that which essays the analysis of woman is, as a rule, the most ignorant and fatuous, and the four literary men who contribute the "Study in Wives" to the current issue of the "North American Review," and who do their best to dry-nurse the ideal as an oblation to the spirit of patriotism, are conspicuous examples both of the ignorance and the fatuity. Max O'Rell is the only one of these critics who brings to his task any grain of wit or enthusiasm. He is so well pleased with himself and with the wife of his nation that he goes very near convincing us that France alone produces the ideal life-partner. "The politics of matrimony is," he declares, "a science inborn in French women," and we are inclined to think he is right, especially when he goes on to point out that "she understands to a supreme degree the poetry of matrimony," which "has all the more chance to live long in French matrimonial life because our wedding ceremony is not, as in England, the end of courtship but only the beginning of it. In France, when you have married your wife, you have to win her, and the process is very pleasant. I have often told my English friends that if in their country there were not so many kisses indulged in before the wedding ceremony there would be a great many more administered after it. Why is the French woman of forty so attractive? Because every feature of her face shows that she has been petted and loved." Then Max O'Rell goes on to jeer at the British custom of long engagements that bring to both parties disillusionment without real knowledge of each other. In the matrimonial life which follows this probation he pictures them in the evening, "he sulking over a book with his slippers on [what an utter want of respect to a woman!] and she with her curl-papers." A Parisian, on the other hand, gets rid of her curl-papers before her husband catches sight of them. She knows with instinctive wisdom that unlovely impressions sink as deep into a man's heart as visions of beauty, and that in such manner a great passion may be worn drop by drop away. "Through French life," to quote Max O'Rell again, "the married woman goes on the principle laid down by Balzac, that a man who penetrates into his wife's dressing-room is either a fool or a philosopher. She does not want him to be a philosopher, and she takes great care that he does not make a fool of himself." For the analysis of "The English Wife" we are indebted to Mr. Grant Allen, who writes with the judicial impartiality of one who is not interested in his subject. There is not, he says, one ideal, but three ideals: one for the aristocracy, which neither they nor we believe in; another for the middle-class; and yet another for the labouring class. He describes both the British matron who embodies the aspiration of the great bourgeois mind and the heroic

drudge who cooks the scanty dinner and bears the numerous children of the British workman. Each is more wife than woman, and more mother than wife, and neither arouses in us more enthusiasm than she kindles in the heart of the man whose home she renders respectable. But, granted that all Mr. Grant Allen says is true, he does the English wife less than justice. It is astounding to find so modern a philosopher clinging to the old Adelphi gallery gospel that the upper classes are uniformly vicious and mercenary. "The British aristocrat," he declares, "has no ideals," and then goes on to admit that "his wife is rich or beautiful or both," adding, "he and she go their own ways forthwith, and those ways usually land one or other in the divorce court," which shows that Mr. Grant Allen knows even less about the British aristocrat, the most tolerant husband in existence, than he does about women.

We are not surprised to read in the opening paragraph of Mr. Karl Blind's treatise on "The German Wife," that when a German is questioned as to the charms of his womankind "his thoughts easily go back to Tacitus," and that "our cultured classes are very much historically inclined." It is fortunate for the peace of the latter-day Teuton that his inclinations do not turn to contemporary history, or he would become aware that the women of the Fatherland are to-day the least attractive women in Europe. For if the English woman is apt to wear curl-papers in the evening, the modern German wife wears them all the time. Her personal appearance and her character are those of an upper servant, and her husband regards and treats her as such. In all ranks of society the women spend their lives between the nursery and the kitchen, without even the independence of movement and the love of luxury which redeem the middle-class English wife from the eternal round of petty domestic cares. Nor does the average German woman possess that sane and sweet comeliness which makes our women—even in their curl-papers—fair to see. In no other European nation is woman so devoid of beauty and grace as she is in Germany. She has become a synonym of all that is incoherent in form and expressionless in feature. Herein lies the secret of the Teuton pre-eminence both as student and as soldier. Whatever of artistic sensuousness there is in him he satisfies with music, whatever of idealism he feeds with philosophy.

The last of this conjugal quartette is "The Scandinavian Wife," as Mr. H. H. Boyesen sees her. We learn from him that the Norse countries are suffering from a severe epidemic of the New Woman. On the whole, he is somewhat pessimistic concerning "the fair northern maiden" of the future and her fitness for the matrimonial yoke. Indeed, Max O'Rell's exultant appreciation of his countrywomen is not emulated by any of his companion critics. The capacity to create a genuine ideal is the rarest of all human characteristics. "Not till the fire is smouldering in the grate, look we for any kinship with the stars." Although the student and the dreamer have between them fashioned an æsthetic abstraction out of the ideal woman, the average sensual man neither desires nor pursues her. At no time of life is the average Englishman sufficiently enamoured of his visions to believe in their possible realization within his experience. He does not want to domesticate a recording angel or one too bright and good for the darning of stockings and five o'clock tea. In men of this type ideals become mere preferences, such as a bias in favour of deep eyes or a low voice. Their aspirations cease to be ideal in any sense of the word, and that way lies, perhaps, a weak dilution of felicity.

A WOMAN OF THE DAY.

GOLD-DIGGING IN BRITISH GUIANA.

THE working gold-digger of British Guiana is almost invariably a negro. Accustomed to the use of the shovel in cane cultivation, he is well fitted for the diggings. Strong and muscular, and generally healthy, he can, when he pleases, do a great deal of hard work. In digging canals on the plantations he is often up to his middle in mud and water, and therefore is in his element when excavating the beds of creeks and putting in sluices. The independent gold-digger is unknown—he cannot reach the placers on foot with his "swag" on his back, or even with the aid of a horse. Everything must

be done by means of boats, and capital is required to fit out an expedition. All the great rivers are obstructed by rapids to ascend and shoot, which requires great skill and is attended with considerable risk. The Government will not allow a boat to start without a skilled captain and bowman, but even then the crossing down is dangerous.

The upward journeys are long and tiresome. Day after day passes in pulling hard against the stream or hauling the boat through the more turbulent channels. Exposed alternately to drenching rains and burning sun, the paddlers can only accomplish a few miles in a day. The difference between the upward and downward journey is so great that it sometimes takes a month to reach a place from which the return voyage is made in five days. It will be easily understood from this that the current is very strong, and that where the rapids pour between and among great boulders the greatest skill is required. The boat is left entirely in the hands of the two men at bow and stern, who use their paddles with the greatest dexterity. The swerving of a few inches may cause the boat to go broadside on a boulder, and in a moment its passengers and crew will be whirled among the rocks, with hardly a chance of escape even to the most powerful swimmer. Possibly the Indian boatmen may manage to get ashore, but the gold-diggers, with their accumulations of the precious metal, are lost. Fortunately, however, accidents rarely happen, but the negro's face always becomes livid when he has to pass through the most dangerous channels. To the white man, however, this spice of danger adds a relish to the journey—it prevents his feeling dull. Then, again, he is always returning home, and if he has been successful, is full of pleasant anticipations. The faster he goes the more he likes it. The side channels are safer, but no matter for that. He has been away from town for three months, with only negroes for company, and is eager to see his friends and learn the news. For all he knows, the world may have been revolutionized since he left. I remember an intelligent fellow coming back after four months' absence. How he devoured the files of newspapers! What, President Carnot murdered, and he knowing nothing about it! In the bush he had no books—the boat could not be lumbered with anything of the sort. His evenings were very dull, and the talk of his men uninteresting. Sometimes they sang "Potero gold," or one of those shady improvisations in which they are adepts. After a few evenings, however, this became tiresome, and he longed for a book or newspaper. In rummaging about in his trunk he once came upon an old local newspaper wrapped round a pair of boots. This was quite a godsend. He read it over and over again, until even the advertisements were familiar. Then he began to wonder how somebody's auction sale had gone off, and who were there. He knew the people, and could picture some of the characters, especially those who only went for a free lunch.

This loneliness at night is one of the greatest drawbacks of a life in the bush. As six o'clock arrives, down goes the sun, and for twelve hours you can hardly move. Your lamp is small, and the supply of oil is limited. You potter about the camp-fire, lounge in your hammock for a while, and then get up to stretch your legs. Of course you are tired. You have been eagerly at work the whole day, now superintending the men, and then trying a new digging to see how it pans out. At last you drop asleep, to wake up in the small hours of the morning, burning with the desire to do something.

As I said before, the gold-digger must be a capitalist. A prospecting expedition costs over five hundred dollars, and, when it comes to working a claim, about three times that amount must be spent before there is any return. Most of the prospectors have hitherto been negroes, and it is only lately that a few white men have joined in the search. As a labourer the black man is highly appreciated, but as head of an expedition he fails for want of administrative ability. Then, he seems never to be able to calculate the value of a claim; as long as he finds gold he is satisfied, and returns with a glowing report. As the precious metal can be found almost everywhere in certain districts, this kind of prospecting is useless. Not only must a great many trials be made, but calculations of

the cost of working gone into in a business-like manner. Otherwise the expedition will be a failure. A negro calls upon you in Georgetown and hints that he knows of a good "placer." He has no money, and wants you to fit out an expedition. Of course he gives you what he considers full particulars—he washed several "battels" and they gave him sixteen cents worth of gold to each. He quarrelled with his former employer because the capitalist would not agree to his terms. All you have to do is to spend about four hundred dollars, and with the returns of the first expedition you can embark more largely. He will do almost anything, and be satisfied with labourer's wages at first. This perhaps decides you. Convinced that the man is honest you fit him out, and sit down to await the result. He returns with perhaps three hundred dollars in gold, but you have to pay the men's wages, say four or five hundred dollars. Of course he has excuses. The flood was too high and a dam had to be made, or there was a drought, and there were no means of washing without bringing water from a long distance.

Once embarked in the business, you are fascinated. You cannot submit to the first loss, but must try to retrieve your fortune by risking larger sums. You are convinced that gold can be got; for you see your neighbours, Brown and Smith, setting up as carriage people on the strength of a "placer." Perchance you may ultimately succeed, but the odds are against you. You plunge deeper and deeper, always getting enough to prevent your giving up, until some day you find yourself utterly ruined. At no time were the expenses covered, and yet your "placer" may have been a good one, and would have paid fairly well under good management.

Cases like these are continually happening, and gold digging is now a common excuse for bankruptcy. What I have been considering, however, is failure through the incompetency of the manager—there have been plenty of cases where the prospector was dishonest. Rogues can do what they like in the bush, sell your provisions to others, and never come back, or bring you some pitiful tale of an upset in which they lost everything. The fact is, you are entirely in their hands—even if convinced of their dishonesty you can do nothing for want of evidence. Your man takes care to have the labourers on his side and with them at his back will triumphantly refute every charge.

The obvious lesson to be learnt from this is, if you wish to be successful, you must go into the bush yourself, and to do so without risk you must be accustomed to an out-door life. Even in Australia and California—temperate climates—clerks died off very quickly. In the tropics the risk of sickness and death is enormous. Nevertheless, I have seen white men enjoying robust health under the most trying circumstances, and they were never so happy as when in the bush.

J. RODWAY.

ENGLISH MUSIC AND ENGLISH CRITICISM.

HE would indeed be a churlish fellow who went with aught but congratulations to the Crystal Palace last Saturday, when the weekly concerts celebrated their fortieth birthday. Forty years of heroic effort, in a sense, of triumphant achievement—it is a noble record, one for which both Sir George Grove, one of the most useful musical amateurs the world has produced, and Mr. August Manns, one of the greatest of living conductors, deserve our most grateful thanks. For the greater part of these forty years they, like a pair of musical Atlases, carried the whole musical world (of London) on their shoulders, until they made it possible for others to share the burden. While the dotish Philharmonic Society was alternately wallowing in the mire of German mediocrity and trying to wash away the filth in the insipid stream of Italian mediocrity, only at the Crystal Palace could the young British composer, with or without ability—chiefly, I am afraid, without ability—bring his works to a hearing. If he proved himself worthy (in the opinion of Sir G. Grove and Mr. Manns) he received encouragement; if unworthy, at least he was never discouraged; and if some unworthy were encouraged, and some worthy passed over without encouragement, we cannot blame Mr. Manns or Sir George Grove, for the "Edinburgh Review" tells us we are all (save the "Edinburgh

Review" writer) liable—nay, certain—to err, and the spirit in which they worked is above all praise.

Their efforts to raise up a national school of musicians have not been crowned with any success. We have no school of English music, no music of our own, and the reason lies close at hand. In England music is a trade, and men and women go into it, as they might go into typewriting, with the one object of making it pay. There are two ways, and two ways only, of making it pay. One is to write, or, if you are an executant, to sing or play, vulgar music, and that is the most profitable way. But it demands a certain amount of brains; and the safer way is to make a reputation as a "sound" teacher by never trying to do anything that no one else can do. Then, if you are dull enough, one of our "great music schools" will take you up. For our music schools, having been founded and carried on by men who went into music as a trade, have been in the past and are in only a slightly less degree at present, flagrantly commercial concerns. Academic musical life is a cesspool, a veritable Augean stable, sadly in need of a Hercules to clean it out. Sir A. C. Mackenzie has done his best. He found the Royal Academy almost hopelessly diseased, and had to contrive the odious body known as the Associated Board to suck off the poison that was destroying it. In other words, the professors refused to give up the lucrative trade of examining, and Sir A. C. Mackenzie had to allow them to continue; only, by forming them with infinite trouble into the Associated Board, he managed to prevent the scandalous business going on to the same extent inside the Academy walls. The Royal College never fell so low as the Academy, for it was in better hands from the first (though no one seems clearly to understand the *coup d'état* by which Sir John Stainer found himself shut out from the National Training School, of which he was principal, or how the Royal College so mysteriously took its place); but its fees are exorbitant, and the main inducement it holds out to intending students is not that it will make artists of them, but that it can get them more or less profitable posts when their education is finished. The Guildhall School fees used to be reasonable, but they were raised at the same time as Sir Joseph Barnby's salary; because, I suppose, the professors would have grumbled if their chief had got more and they had not. Can the influence of schools run on such lines be other than entirely bad, would not the chances of our producing a national music be vastly increased if they could all be closed to-morrow? No master ever yet learnt composition at a school; and whatever latent genius there may be amongst English students is repressed beyond fear of its rising again by the teaching of "sound" professors, with their ignorant cant about "classical form," their perpetual injunctions to learn to keep rules before breaking them, their dread and genuine concern lest their pupils should disgrace them by doing something extravagant or unusual. I would say to every pupil in the Royal Academy, College, Guildhall School, or elsewhere: Never mind your masters; do whatever you feel inclined to do; learn when the rules may safely be kept by seeing what follows on breaking them; develop the sinews of your invention by doing the most extravagant things, for when you have strength you will soon enough learn how to control it: do thus and a musician may come forth from amongst you, whereas if you obey your teachers you will certainly grow to be as dull as they are. But it would seem that the Academical atmosphere paralyzes the most hopeful talent. Compare the Dr. Stanford of the "Cavalier Songs" with the Dr. Stanford of "East to West," the wonderful delicacy and lyric charm of the "Troubadour," by Dr. Mackenzie, with Sir A. C. Mackenzie's horrible "Nautical Overture"! And the one thing that the Academies might do towards generating a genuine musical atmosphere is the last thing they will agree to do. The only vital form of musical art at present is opera (using the word in its widest sense to include all operatic works from Gluck to Wagner); and great results might follow were there an opera-house where opera could be heard at a nominal charge for admittance every evening throughout the year. The Royal College could easily found, endow, and carry on such an opera-house; but the Royal College will never do so. The professors are doubtless of opinion

that a system of scholarships is much more efficient; and scholarships are given, and the students take their lessons and grow impotent on them, and the professors take their fees and grow fat on them; and every one is so satisfied that no outsider dare grumble at the system. Its fruits were endured by those who sat out last Saturday's concert, when two pieces, Mr. MacCunn's "Land of the Mountain and the Flood" overture, and Dr. Stanford's song, "There's a bower of roses," were worth listening to. Dr. Parry's piano concerto, especially the slow movement, contains some pretty and some really emotional passages, and is certainly a specimen of Dr. Parry at his very best. But, by the way, it is idle to point to the difference between the compositions played on Saturday and two pieces by Mr. J. F. Barnett given on the twelfth as a proof of our "musical progress." Truly the world has moved since Mr. Barnett was young, and the younger composers with it; but the younger men are as far as Mr. Barnett from the goal of great achievement. Mr. Barnett reflects Mendelssohn; the others reflect Wagner and Brahms: that is the sole distinction, except, perhaps, that Mr. Barnett has the finer ear for lovely effects.

Sir George Grove and Mr. Manns have not raised a school, but one important thing have they accomplished: they have created a musical public. They played the great music so persistently that at last it took possession of many hearers, and drove out any lingering taste for small music. For one mighty difference between noble and mean music is that the noble enters and remains with you, while the mean slinks ignominiously away; and the difference between a good and a bad critic is that the good critic is readily possessed by noble music, and feels keenly the supreme joy of being possessed by it, while the bad critic is slow to be possessed by it, and generally content with the measure of joy he derives from mean music. The Crystal Palace concerts have not made better critics of those who frequent them, but they have taught to many the delight that is in the great music, and stimulated many to go to Richter and Mottl for that delight—many who at one time would have reckoned a Mottl or a Richter concert a joyless thing. The constant playing of great music is the one thing that avails; teaching, criticism, lectures, are only helpful in so far as they impel people to go to hear great music greatly played; for in presence of great music the power of appreciating it, the capacity to feel its beauty, grows like a flower in sunshine.

Judging from an article in the October issue of the "Edinburgh Review," two classes of men have evidently not taken advantage of the Crystal Palace concerts: the amateurs who write a good deal of musical criticism, and the editors who admit it to the columns of their papers. The "Edinburgh" article is on "Recent Musical Criticism," and rumour attributes it to a Mr. Statham. He does not approve of Schubert's instrumental music; and ignorant of Liszt's admiration for it, he tells us it never was approved on the Continent. He bans all "programme music and Romanticism." He is of opinion that "whether the artistic beauty and importance of the music of the school and Palestrina and his compeers are not a little overrated at present, is a question to be asked." "Monteverde . . . has been elevated by some modern critics to a position quite beyond his merits." Bach, of course, he condemns as often very "puerile." He asks "whether it is not the fact that 'Orfeo' is made chiefly by the two great airs for the principal character, and whether the remainder is not rather weak, uninteresting, and naïve music." Wagner flings "the notes anyhow, so that they seem to subserve the desired effect." Mendelssohn "was one of the few composers to whom, in his best moments, all the resources of art were equally available," yet it appears that "Mendelssohn's main deficiency was actually in technique." So he runs on. Dead composers and living critics alike he slanders with exhilarating impartiality; and he is allowed to parade his ignorance of commonly known facts, his inability to comprehend the greatest work of the greatest musicians, his bad manners and dishonest arguments, simply because the "Edinburgh Review" did not know enough about music to save itself from the first quasi-musical adventurer who came along. The "Edinburgh" would never have dreamed of accepting a literary review from a writer

who was careful to announce emphatically that no kind of literature pleased him. The moral is only too obvious. If only to save themselves from being fooled in the sight of the people, all editors must henceforth educate themselves at the Saturday concerts or elsewhere. J. F. R.

MORE MASTERPIECES.

"The Rise of Dick Halward." A New Play in Three Acts. By Jerome K. Jerome. Garrick Theatre. 19 October, 1895.

WITH every possible disposition to tolerate all views of life on the stage, I cannot quite keep my patience with the pessimism of Mr. Jerome K. Jerome and his school. I can endure, for a strictly limited time, the splenetic, cynical pessimist, who lashes and satirizes the abundant follies and weaknesses of mankind to excuse himself for giving it up as a bad job. But your maudlin pessimist who, like Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, says "We are all hopeless scoundrels; so let us be kind and gentle to one another": him I find it hard to bear. Mr. Jerome's hero Dick Halward is called Dick because that is a less harsh term than Richard. A judge might say, "Richard Halward: after a patient trial, and upon evidence which must convince every reasonable person of the justice of the verdict, you have been found guilty of one of the meanest frauds that has ever come before a court of law. By selling your professional honour and robbing your friend at one stroke, you have shown yourself void alike of character in your public capacity and of feeling in your private relations. You are a dishonest and worthless fellow; and the sentence of the court is, &c. &c." Not thus Mr. Jerome K. Jerome. He grasps the culprit's hand, and, in a voice husky with emotion, says: "Dick, old chap, not another word about that money. Not a man of us but would have done just as you did, Heaven help us, if we got the chance. You were tempted, and you fell; but you sent £5 to your sisters when you were poor; you never had a hard word for the housemaid at your chambers; and in the sterling simplicity of your heart you hid your pipe and slippers in the coal-scuttle when you had lady visitors. How many of us would do as much? You have sinned; but you have suffered; and it was love that led you astray. Let the cold world say what it will, you shall have a happy ending, Dick, dear old man. God bless you, Dick, God bless you. Go and live happily ever after. It's unmanly to—dash it, I think I'll go and smoke a pipe outside, if you don't mind, Dick." Ibsen might have been a rich man to-day if he had only taken that view of things. Perhaps, however, it is only fair that it should bring dramatic authors money; for it will assuredly not bring them anything else.

A criminal is not necessarily a despicable person. The man who is strongly, ably, egotistically and therefore self-respectingly wicked may be crowned or hung, as the case may be, according to his failure or success; but he is not despised. The only one insufferable and unpardonable thing for a criminal to do is to confess before he is found out. When a man goes to a police station and gives himself up for an undiscovered murder, the first uncontrollable impulse of every healthy person is one of impatient exasperation with a fool who cannot bear his cross and hold his tongue, but must tear open a healed wound for the sake of having his miserable conscience soothed by the hangman. Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, by way of carrying to its possible extreme his pessimistic theory that the baser a man is, the more intensely human and sympathetic he is, completes the infamy of Dick Halward by making him volunteer a quite exceptionally gratuitous and dastardly confession at the moment when he believes he is going to commit suicide by taking his father's patent headache cure. Under such circumstances a man with any decency left in him would surely make a stage will leaving his property to the person he had robbed of it, and then slip quietly overboard, so to speak. But Halward cannot deny himself a dram of sympathy at the price of leaving everybody disgusted, ashamed, and miserably uncomfortable. He pours the headache cure into a tumbler (by the way, it is quite a genuine cure, and may be relied on not only for headache, but for ailments of all kinds—nineteen drops of hydrocyanic

acid), and summons to his presence his two most intimate friends, one of whom, it is hardly necessary to say, is the youth whose inheritance he has stolen. His own betrothed and that of the young man are also sent for. He then baldly confesses; and the play immediately collapses like a punctured tyre, Mr. Jerome's stagecraft collapsing visibly with it. For the unhappy four witnesses of the confession are so totally unequal to the occasion that they simply drift off the stage one after another flabbergasted, only one of them having the presence of mind to explain that he must go and think about it a little before committing himself. Fortunately for Mr. Jerome, the five parties to this unexampled stage effect were artists no less popular than Miss Marion Terry, Miss Annie Hughes, Mr. Willard, Mr. Esmond, and Mr. Barnes. If Mr. Jerome will try it at the Independent Theatre with five comparatively unknown performers, he will probably be made acutely conscious of his own originality. When the disabled quartet had melted from the gaze of a dumbfounded audience, Halward proceeded to bid the world farewell and raise the headache cure to his lips. We all remembered how, in "The Dancing Girl," when Mr. Tree was in the like extremity, Miss Norreys slid down the banisters and seized the fatal goblet at the last moment. We were therefore not surprised to see Miss Marion Terry come back. Since it was Miss Terry's objection to marrying a man with less than five thousand a year that had given Dick his excuse for his crime, the attitude of pure derision in which we should otherwise have contemplated the heroine's reappearance was suspended in view of the possibility that the play might after all end heroically by the lady insisting on sharing the poison, and the two dying together by their own condemnation, Rosmersholmwise. But Mr. Jerome knew better than that. Miss Terry did her duty according to Mr. Jerome's lights—the footlights. She weaned her lover from his fell purpose, and promised to go across the seas with him and begin a new life regardless of income. At which unspeakable crisis of Mr. Jerome's attempt to hold the mirror up to nature, the curtain fell.

I find it very hard to believe that Mr. Jerome, in writing this play, or Mr. Willard in producing it, had any other object than to make money in the cheapest possible way. So hard, in fact, that I shall not try to believe it. No doubt I shall be told that

"The drama's laws the drama's patrons give;

And those who live to please must please to live."

But you cannot get out of an argument by simply telling a lie in a heroic couplet. The drama's laws the drama's patrons do *not* give, nor ever can give: that is the prerogative of the dramatist, and of the dramatist alone. Nor need anybody "please to live": on the contrary, the person who is willing to do anything to please everybody is a universally and deservedly despised and disastrous person. The public cannot do without the theatre; and the actor and the dramatist are therefore in a position to insist on honourable terms. The managers who are at present flinging all professional honour and artistic faith to the winds by competing with one another as to who shall secure the vulgarest and foolishlest play are no more under any compulsion to do so than Sir Henry Irving is to swallow swords, balance straws on his nose, or bounce up through star-traps. Suppose Sir Henry were to join the ignoble scramble after big pecuniary successes, and to abandon the comparatively high ground on which he is now securely planted, what would be the result? Only that on the low ground he would be easily beaten by the music-halls; so that he would debauch his audiences only to lose them. That is just what too many of our managers are doing at the present time. They deliberately select melodramas of the Surrey and Marylebone types, and engage first-rate performers to present them at west end houses at west end prices. In due course these pieces are sent "on tour" through the provinces. Now "the provinces" include suburban London; and at this very moment the people who like shoddy melodrama are waking up to the fact that if they do their playgoing at the suburban houses, they can see, at reasonable prices, exactly the same plays as they are now paying exorbitant prices to see worse acted at west end houses. Take this play of Mr. Jerome's, "The Rise of Dick Halward." The part of Dick, from its

ridiculous invocation of Mephistopheles in the first act to its sham farewell to earth in the last, is arrant fustian, better than the fustian of twenty years ago, no doubt, but still, judged by the literary and artistic standards of to-day, very sorry fustian. Mr. Willard does not play it more effectively than a strong transpontine leading man would: he plays it less effectively. As to Miss Marion Terry, I could name half a dozen young ladies, not to be compared to her for a moment in artistic power and accomplishment, who might replace her with advantage as the heroine. The part in her hands is only a bad misfit. Miss Hughes, Mr. Esmond, and the rest are equally, if less grotesquely, thrown away on their parts. "The Prude's Progress" was far more successfully represented, not only because it was a better play, but because it had a weaker cast. When "The Rise of Dick Halward" is performed by actors just fit for the class of people to whose level the play has been written down, it will go ten times better than it does at the Garrick, although the sums paid to the leading performers will be less by about five-sixths.

In Mr. Oscar Wilde's "Ideal Husband" there was a remarkable scene in which the fraudulent Cabinet Minister reproached his wife with idealizing and worshipping his moral virtues instead of loving his very self as he loved her. This so exactly suits Mr. Jerome's sentimental pessimism that he flourishes it in a crude state all over his love scenes. The lady reproves Dick for loving her in spite of her demerits: he replies by laboriously explaining Mr. Oscar Wilde's point to her, thereby very effectually reducing it to absurdity. Fortunately for the play, Mr. Jerome has a vein of shrewd fun, and has discovered that in working the familiar but safe stage trick of *dénouement* by coincidence, the long arm cannot be too long, in spite of the certainty that the critics will immediately fill up their notices with futile complaints of improbability. So what with Mr. Jerome's jokes, and his manipulation of a camera and a microscope, the play passes the time. But it is as much inferior to "The Prude's Progress" as that play, I hope, will prove to Mr. Jerome's next.

In order to fully realize how bad a popular play can be, it is necessary to see it twice. Messrs. Morell and Waller gave me that opportunity by reopening the Shaftesbury last Monday with Mr. Carton's "Home Secretary." Mr. Waller, unfortunately, had such a devastating cold that I forgot to criticize his acting in my anxiety about his health. Highly as I have always appreciated Mr. Charles Wyndham's power as an actor, I doubt if I ever did him complete justice until I saw him replaced as Duncan Trendel by Mr. Fred Terry. Yet I cannot help rather liking Mr. Terry and Miss Neilson: after all, perhaps acting would spoil them. Miss Lottie Venne's bag of tricks, though infallibly effective, did not console me for the acting of Miss Mary Moore; and Mrs. Arthur Ayres might almost as well have been Miss Fanny Coleman in "Dick Halward," for all the success she had in persuading me that elderly ladies in society (or out of it) ever talked and comported themselves in her fashion anywhere but on the stage. Mr. Kemble was a decided acquisition as the Solicitor-General; and Miss Millett, Mr. Sidney Brough, and Mr. Brookfield, were as amusing as before. But the performance, for some reason, was a perfunctory one; and the scruples of the Home Secretary's wife were more ridiculous on a second hearing than any one could have believed. At the Criterion there was an atmosphere of conviction about the piece: here, it seemed to me, there was an atmosphere of incredulity. At all events, at the end of the second act I tried the atmosphere outside, and did not change it again that evening. G. B. S.

LIFE INSURANCE AS AN INVESTMENT.—XV.

CLASS OFFICES.—A RESPECTABLE TRIO.

THE life insurance offices hitherto criticized in these columns are practically open to every one who can pass the medical examination. There are, however, three societies which are confined to certain classes of the community. Consequently their power for good or evil is materially restricted, and their affairs are not of much interest to the general public. But it so happens that all these three societies are exceedingly well con-

ducted and exceptionally prosperous; and it is right that we should accord them honourable mention in the course of the present series of articles, not only because this is their due, but also because we think it probable that many of our readers who are eligible for membership of one or other of them are unaware of the advantages they hold out. The offices to which we refer are the "Clergy Mutual Assurance Society," the "University Life Assurance Society," and the "Friends' Provident Institution."

The Clergy Mutual Society was founded in 1829 without any life fund at all, and consisted originally of ten members who waived any claim until ninety others had been induced to join them. From this unpretentious beginning—curiously similar, in its way, to that small *coterie* of Post Office clerks which became the parent of the Co-operative Stores—has sprung what may without apology be described as the finest life insurance office in existence. In the year 1836 the members distributed among themselves a modest surplus of £3192; in 1891 no less than £517,000 was divided! An attentive examination of the accounts and other statistics of the society has failed to reveal to us any flaw either in the investment of the funds—now amounting to close upon four millions sterling—or in the basis of valuation, or in the economy of the management. Last, but by no means least, the prospectus appears to us to be a perfectly honest and straightforward document. This is high praise, especially in the case of an insurance office; and, as the society employs no agents, and pays no commission for the introduction of new business, we can conceive that our remarks will not be altogether palatable to certain of our quasi-professional critics, whose occupation would be gone if all offices were like the Clergy Mutual. But they will be puzzled to find another office which, while calculating the reserve necessary to meet its liabilities on the most stringent life tables known to actuarial practice and at a rate of interest $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent less than is actually being earned, and while abstaining from any sort of risky investment, nevertheless yields its policyholders the really brilliant results set forth in the Clergy Mutual prospectus.

An italicized caution to insurers immediately precedes the table of bonuses declared at the last valuation in 1891, and is in the following terms, which we commend to the careful attention of Mr. H. W. Manly (who, by the way, has not yet responded to our invitation of 7 September to expound his new system of computing bonuses) and some other actuaries. "In considering such results as an indication of what may be expected in the future, it should be most particularly observed that all depends on the circumstances affecting profit, such as mortality, interest, and expenses, being as favourable in the future as in the five years ending 31 May, 1891." Subject to this caution, the prospects offered to investors are as follows:

Age at Entry.	Age when payable.	Annual Premium on Policy for £1000.	Premiums accumulated at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent compound interest.	Policy and Bonus at Maturity.	Sum returned in excess of total premiums paid.	Gain as compared with a $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent investment
35	50	£ s. d. 67 10 0	£ 1241	£ 1300	£ 287	£ 59
35	60	40 1 8	1403	1500	498	97
25	60	27 3 4	1529	1700	749	171

The prospectus takes the case "of a person insuring in the year ending 31 May, 1892, at the age of thirty next birthday, for £1000, to be paid either at his death or on his attaining the age of sixty. Assuming the above rate of bonus to be maintained, an addition of £100 would be made to the sum assured in 1896, and a further addition of £100 at each subsequent division of bonus. If he attained to the age of sixty, the result would be as follows:

Sum originally assured £1000
Bonuses thereon 600

Total sum payable at age sixty . £1600
being £623 15s. more than the total premiums paid, and the life having been assured for thirty years."

The society only began to issue policies of this class in January 1891, and the actuary is of course quite

right to avoid making promises which possibly he may be unable to fulfil. But, unless a further fall should take place in the value of money and therefore in the rate of interest procurable on investments, we see no reason why the rate of bonus declared in 1891 should not be maintained. The strength of the reserves and the solidity of the investments, coupled with the fact that the expenses of management only amount to some 6 per cent of the premium income, go far to justify this favourable augury; but we are influenced also by another circumstance, which, unless we are greatly mistaken, has been the most material factor of all in the prosperity of the society. We refer to the extraordinary longevity of the clergy of the Church of England. This is not generally known to anything like its real extent. In common with most other folk, we had recognized that the life of a country parson, despite the anxieties inseparable from the cure of village souls and the bringing up of a large family on a small income, was probably conducive to length of years; but we confess that we were totally unprepared for the astounding results revealed by the mortality experience of the Clergy Mutual Society. We have not space here to discuss the interesting statistics collated by the actuary and the medical officer; but it will suffice to say that during the fifty-eight years from 1829 to 1887 the actual death claims amounted to £2,821,029, whereas according to the Carlisle Table of Mortality they would have been £4,213,440! In other words, the society only had to pay 67 per cent of the amount it might reasonably have expected to be called upon to pay. For deaths under the age of fifty-five, the ratio of actual to expected claims was only 53 per cent! The disparity between the actual claims and the liability, as computed by the more stringent tables used in the society's valuations, would, of course, be still wider. It is really very fortunate for the British taxpayer—or is it the National Debt Commissioners who should be congratulated?—that the clergy do not make a general practice of buying Government annuities. According to the Government Tables for Male Annuitants, the net value of an annuity of £1 on the life of a man aged forty is £16 7s. 6d., but the Clergy Mutual experience shows that the net value in the case of a clergyman of that age is slightly over £19; so that, assuming the margin allowed in the official tables for expenses and contingencies to be correct, the Government would lose, on an average, £2 12s. 6d. for each £1 of annuity granted. In these calculations the rate of interest is taken at 3 per cent. At the present rate of interest on Government stock, the loss would be much more.

The office, however, is not exclusively confined to the clergy, and it may be useful to state precisely the qualifications for membership. The following persons are eligible:

1. Any clergyman of the respective Churches of England and Ireland, or of the Episcopal Church in Scotland.

2. The wife, widow, child, grandchild, father, mother, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, or niece of any such clergyman.

3. The father, mother, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, or niece of the wife or widow of any such clergyman.

4. The wife or widow of any son, grandson, brother, or nephew, or the husband or widower of any daughter, granddaughter, sister, or niece of any such clergyman.

It is not known to every one that the field for insurers is so wide, and we question whether those who are responsible for the continued prosperity of the office will feel particularly thankful for our gratuitous advertisement. Granting that a parson is unloved of the gods, it does not follow that his relations and connections may not die young, and a large influx of sons-in-law and wives' nephews might conceivably kill the proverbial goose. But this is not our affair. We have only to tell our readers what seems to us a good thing for them, supposing that they are in a position to secure it. The Clergy Mutual office will, no doubt, be able to look after itself. For the rest, it reflects high credit on the Established Church that a society which has for its patrons the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, for its president the Bishop of London, and for its chairman the Dean of Westminster, should be so admirably conducted

The operations of the University Life Office, which is the senior by four years of the Clergy Mutual, are restricted to members of the Universities of the United Kingdom and public school men. The society has recently declared a phenomenal bonus, which, if it be maintained, will yield the following results on an endowment insurance :

Age at Entry.	Age when payable.	Annual Premium on Policy for £1000.	Premiums accumulated at 2½ per cent compound interest.	Policy and Bonus at Maturity.	Sum returned in excess of total premiums paid.	Gain as compared with a 2½ per cent investment.
35	50	£ 68 13 4	£ 1262	£ 1360	£ 330	£ 98
35	60	40 10 0	1418	1600	587	182
25	60	27 1 8	1525	1840	892	315

According to this table, the prospects of an investor are even better than in the Clergy Mutual Office. But it is important to notice that a considerable portion of the profits shown in the accounts of the University Office is due to the writing up of securities, a proceeding which, although defensible enough, cannot obviously be continued indefinitely. We should be sorry, therefore, to encourage any one to hope for results as favourable as those shown above. It seems almost invidious to make comparisons between two offices both of which are so excellent; but we are inclined to think that a man who is at liberty to enter either of them would do wisely in choosing the Clergy Mutual; first, because the ratio of expenses to premium income is only 6 per cent, as against 13 per cent in the University Office; secondly, because the shareholders in the latter office absorb one-tenth of the profits (equivalent to another 4½ per cent of the premium income), while the Clergy Mutual policyholders, of course, have the whole of their profits for themselves; and, thirdly, because the rate of interest earned by the University Office, owing to the valuing-up already mentioned, is now somewhat less than that earned by its rival. But we would not be understood in any way to decry a society which we believe to be in all essentials ably and worthily conducted, and which, among other guarantees of good faith, has the Prime Minister on its board of directors. The number of really good proprietary offices is so small that we are the more ready to applaud a good one when we find it. It is worth noticing that this society does about one-fifth as much business as the "Gresham Life Assurance Society," and pays at least five times as large a bonus. So much for the size of an office as a criterion of its merits! A university or public school man in search of an investment at once sound and profitable can easily do worse with his money than effect an endowment insurance with the University Life Office. If a little more vigour and enterprise were infused into the management, we should say that he could scarcely do better.

The Friends' Provident Institution, established in 1832, is the last of this highly respectable trio. It is open only to Quakers and their relatives. Those who are familiar with the business methods of the Society of Friends need hardly to be told that the management of this society leaves little to be desired. Endowment insurances with profits, however, have not long been issued, and the compound bonus of 24s. per cent per annum declared in 1892 seems low by comparison with the liberal treatment accorded to whole-life insurers, even when due allowance is made for the exceptionally moderate rates of premium. We append our usual examples :

Age at Entry.	Age when payable.	Annual Premium on Policy for £1000.	Premiums accumulated at 2½ per cent compound interest.	Policy and Bonus at Maturity.	Sum returned in excess of total premiums paid.	Loss as compared with a 2½ per cent investment.
35	50	£ 65 18 4	£ 1211	£ 1191	£ 202	£ 20
35	60	39 8 4	1380	1338	353	42
25	60	27 11 8	1553	1503	538	50

It must be borne in mind that, owing to the low rates of premium, these policies contain more of the insurance and less of the investment element than those of most

offices. In other words, a man obtains his life insurance during the term of the policy more cheaply, and he cannot, therefore, expect to get so profitable an investment. Nevertheless, we shall be surprised if the bonuses do not improve in the near future. Quakers, besides being capable men of business, are also notorious for living long—although not, perhaps, quite so long as an English clergyman.

MONEY MATTERS.

THE Money Market was quiet during the past week, and day-to-day loans were easily procurable at ½ per cent. For short periods only ¼ per cent was asked. Discount rates were firm. What with dear money on the Continent and the increase of trade, it is possible there may presently be a rise in the value of money; but the advance does not seem likely to be very considerable. Consols were quoted on Thursday at 107½ for money and 107⅞ for the account. The Bank-rate is unchanged.

The official announcement that the agreement has been signed for the purchase by the Bank of New Zealand of the Colonial Bank of New Zealand probably means that a fresh New Zealand loan will be shortly put upon the London market. It means also that the Government of the Colony have again come to the rescue of an insolvent concern, this time by undertaking to purchase on its behalf one of the few banks at the Antipodes which have been properly managed. The profits of the Colonial Bank will wipe out the losses of the Bank of New Zealand, and there is every reason why the Government should at any cost prevent a collapse which would be followed by widespread ruin. It is, however, safe to say that when the Government made themselves responsible for £2,000,000 to save the Bank of New Zealand, they did not foresee the lengths to which their public spirit would carry them.

On the Stock Exchange business was inactive, owing to the disturbed state of the Mining Market. All good stocks, however, remained steady. The depression in Paris, where wild speculation has been rampant for some months, was more pronounced than ever, and "executions" were rather numerous. On Wednesday the rumour that a new bank for carrying-over purposes was about to be started in Paris under the auspices of Messrs. Rothschild and Wernher, Beit & Co., induced "bear" covering here in the few "free market" specialties and caused a partial rally in them. As for the bulk of the long list of mines, they remained as dull as before. The French banks connected with mining transactions have all declined more or less; but the Ottoman Bank, which has been initiated by Sir Edgar Vincent into the mysteries of South African "deals," and particularly those of Mr. Barnato, had the severest drop. The chief features of the Mining Market at present are: Forced or voluntary liquidations connected with the whole list of mines, incidental "bear" sales and repurchases of leading specialties, a fall in prices in the morning and a partial recovery in the evening. If liquidations, such as those taking place at the present moment, were more frequent, there would be some chance of reaching a reasonable level of prices.

Three hundred thousand shares of an American company, the "Anaconda Copper Mine," which were bought by Messrs. Rothschild and their "Exploration Company" at about par, say £5, and syndicated at £6, were introduced on the Stock Exchange on Monday at £7—for the benefit of trustful and benighted investors. The promotion of the company was marked by the worst features of South African mining enterprise; such as the absence of any prospectus, and the exaction of a premium from the underwriters, instead of their being paid a commission for their risk.

The prices of Home Railways fluctuated more or less in sympathy with the South African Market; towards the end of the week they showed firmness. On the English lines the returns were in the main satisfactory. Little business was done in American Railways, which were adversely affected by the fear of fresh gold shipments, in consequence of the advance of the ex-

change on London. Investment bonds were, however, in good demand. The Foreign market was depressed early in the week by Paris selling, but recovered its tone later on, owing to the rally in South African shares. Silver was quiet, and was quoted on Thursday at 30½d. per ounce.

"Truth" has discovered that the thirty-six "Gold" claims which the Prince's Gold Mines, Limited, with a capital of £130,000, was formed some time ago to acquire, were originally sold and transferred for the sum of £850 cash. "Truth" is aghast at the prodigious spectacle of promoters' plunder here unfolded. But our contemporary scarcely realizes that it only by such modest little deals as this that the poor promoter is enabled to live a life of even moderate ease.

NEW ISSUES, &c.

THE "BREAD UNION" GANG.

THEIR SCHEMES AND THEIR SUPPORTERS.

There are some new developments in the history of the "Bread Union" gang. It would appear that Mr. Edward Beale, a company-promoting solicitor, who is none too favourably known in the City of London, is concerned with Harrison Ainsworth, Samuel Wickens, and James Kotchie in their present enterprises as he was in several of their old ones. It is not paying Mr. Beale a compliment to say that the mere fact of his once more joining forces with these individuals shows that the gang has again taken strong root in London. As we have said, Mr. Edward Beale is very unfavourably known, and the "Bread Union" promoters become more dangerous with Mr. Beale to guide them. We cannot spare the space at present to print a list of Mr. Beale's joint-stock undertakings, but they have been many and various and, almost without exception, dubious. The report of the Official Receiver upon the bankruptcy of Mr. Edward Beale in 1893, and his references to Mr. Beale's general conduct, furnish instructive reading. The Official Receiver said that the means employed by Beale to induce the public to subscribe to companies promoted by himself through the medium of a print called the "Financial Critic" (since happily extinct), and other agencies controlled by him, were all "part of a system of deception on his part, as well as of fraud." Mr. Beale's most recent promotion is the Barberton Reefs, Limited, to which, as a "no prospectus" company, we have several times made necessarily unpleasant references. A correspondent has sent us a pamphlet recently issued by Mr. Beale, which purports to contain "Particulars, Reports, Plans, &c. &c. of the 72 Claims 'Pride of Paris' Blocks, Sheba Hill, owned by the Barberton Reefs, Limited." We have no hesitation in calling those "particulars, reports, plans, &c." as absolutely worthless as the shares in the Barberton Reefs, Limited, will prove to those who are foolish enough to purchase any of them. We are sorry to see upon this Barberton Reef pamphlet the names of Major-General Bates as chairman; Messrs. Brown, Janson & Co. as bankers; and Messrs. W. A. Thomson & Co. as solicitors. We must point out that bankers, like other persons, owe a certain duty to the public; their names carry great weight, and those names should not be given haphazard to the project of any promoter of doubtful antecedents. It is a remarkable fact that Messrs. Brown, Janson, & Co. appear as bankers upon the prospectuses of all the "Bread Union" Gang's companies to which we have within the past few weeks referred, viz.:

The Finance Corporation of Western Australia, Limited.

Hannan's Excelsior Gold Mines, Limited.

The Pilbarra United Gold Mines, Limited.

Precisely the same may be said of Messrs. W. A. Thomson & Co., solicitors; of Mr. F. D. Bentley, broker, and member of the Stock Exchange; of Major-General Bates; and (as directors) of nearly all the persons whose names we gave in our last issue. Can these gentlemen be fully aware, first of all, of Mr. Edward Beale's reputation? Are they aware that the "Bread Union" of the notorious Ainsworth, Kotchie, and Wickens was

one of the grossest and cruellest company frauds of recent years? Are they aware that it was by the merest chance—Lord Chief Justice Coleridge's mistaken consideration for their victims—that these "Bread Union" men were saved from their justly merited punishment of penal servitude? Major-General Bates, for example, has had a long and, we believe, a distinguished military career: he served in the Sind campaign of 1843, was present at the battle of Hyderabad, and commanded with distinction a field detachment in operation against the rebels in the Rewa Kanta in 1858. How comes it that a fine old officer like this allows his honourable name to be linked in close association with those of a gang of disreputable company-promoters? It fills us with astonishment not only that adventurers such as Ainsworth, Wickens, Kotchie, and Beale should again raise their heads in the City of London and endeavour to foist their worthless schemes upon the public, but also that they should be able to command the assistance of apparently respectable persons to aid them in exploiting their questionable enterprises. It appears to us to be a very simple matter indeed for the directors of these various companies, as well as for the gentlemen who officiate either as bankers, or solicitors, or brokers to determine their positions in regard to these companies. We trust that it will not be necessary for us to again remind them that—whether as gentlemen or ordinary business men—there is only one honourable course open to them.

"NO PROSPECTUS" COMPANIES.

We have the following additions to make to our previously published lists of these unsafe and delusive undertakings:

Barborton Consols, Limited. Capital £100,000.

Gold Lands Corporation, Limited. Capital £255,000.

Great Boulder Junction Reefs, Limited. Capital £130,000.

Simpson's Lever Chain, Limited. Capital £250,000.

Simpson's Lever Chain (Foreign and Colonial), Limited. Capital £1,000,000.

Barborton Consols, Limited, is, of course, an own brother to Barborton Reefs, Limited, a company to which we have several times referred. We understand that both these concerns are promoted by Mr. Edward Beale, the well known and highly respected city solicitor, whom we mention above. This circumstance alone renders criticism unnecessary. The Gold Lands Corporation is a promotion of Mr. Herbert Moir, whose connection with the disastrous Sapphire and Ruby Company of Montana should not be overlooked. According to the memorandum of association of this company, a number of persons are said to have subscribed for the singular quantity of 1006 shares each. Among these we observe the name of Mr. W. P. Forbes, of the Central News Agency, who is also a director of that unpromising project, the Cheque Bank, Limited, as well as of several other equally curious undertakings. It is stated that the whole £255,000 of this Company's capital has been "privately" subscribed, but, according to the memorandum of association just referred to, only £66,396 worth of shares have been applied for, and it does not appear that any of these have been actually paid for. Although a little more plausible in character than some of the other "no prospectus" companies, this concern is evidently promoted with the same desire to hoodwink investors. Of the Simpson's Lever Chain Companies no particulars are vouchsafed, except that Simpson's Lever Chain is a really wonderful invention, and that the capital of each Company (amounting in the aggregate to £1,250,000) has been "privately" subscribed. It would hardly appear to have been necessary to go out of the way to give the public even these items of interesting information; but the fact that strenuous efforts are being made to dispose of some of those "privately subscribed" shares may possibly explain the necessity.

BROOKMAN'S GOLD EXPLORATION AND FINANCE ASSOCIATION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, LIMITED.

We have had our attention drawn to this company, the circumstances attending the inception of which are somewhat remarkable. The capital of the company is £125,000, in 250,000 shares of 10s. each, and there

appeared in the "Financial News" of the 22nd inst., a full-page advertisement, giving the names of the directors, &c. of the company, and stating that "150,000 shares having been issued and largely oversubscribed at par," such "particulars" were only published for "the information of the public." In view of this high-falutin' pronouncement, it was a little unfortunate that there should appear in "Truth" of the 24th inst. what purported to be a "prospectus" of this unique "association." That document began by stating that the subscription list of the company "opened" at ten o'clock on the 23rd inst., and would close for London and country on the 24th; it then proceeded to announce in bold type that "100,000 shares of the present issue have already been privately subscribed for." We are thus brought face to face with a singular state of things: a company which on Tuesday had 150,000 shares issued, and "largely oversubscribed," had on Thursday only 100,000 shares "privately" subscribed, and was seeking fresh subscriptions from the public. No doubt the appearance of both of these announcements was due to some mistake on the part of the promoter or his agents; but what a peep behind the scenes a little "mistake" of this kind gives the outside public! Here is an excellent illustration of the way in which certain joint-stock schemes are foisted upon an unwary public.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PROPOSED COMPLIMENT TO JOURNALISM.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

LYMINGTON, HANTS, 21 October, 1895.

SIR,—A rumour is being circulated, through the Press and otherwise, that Lord Salisbury has expressed his intention of "complimenting journalism" by selecting the Laureate from its ranks. I wonder whether it has occurred to Lord Salisbury that it would be possible, at the same time, to pay a compliment to poetry. Surely, this might be gracefully included in the major intention. Curiously enough the most obvious things are often the last to be discerned, even by Prime Ministers. It seems to me that there is one writer only in whose person the double compliment could be united. Mrs. Meynell, though she writes almost always anonymously, is well known as having attained to the very front rank among English journalists. Her contributions to the "National Observer," under Mr. Henley's editorship, are famous, and the Friday number of the "Pall Mall Gazette," containing her column of the "Wares of Autolycus," is scarcely less so. Among her signed articles, her paper in the "Fortnightly Review," November, 1894, stamps her as the finest English critic of modern times. In modern times, no other besides Goethe, Lessing, or Hegel could have written it. Mrs. Meynell has also political claims, without which journalism would probably not be considered as constituting a primary claim to the Laureateship; and these claims are exactly such as ought to recommend her to the sympathy of Lord Salisbury and his colleagues. She is well known, to perhaps the largest and most influential circle of literary men and women in London, to combine strong Radical principles with equally vigorous Tory tastes, the most charming attitude towards politics which a woman can possibly assume, and that which subserves Conservatism in the only way practicable in times which boast of being governed rather by the heart than by the head. Mrs. Meynell, indeed, does not write much on politics, but Lord Salisbury must be aware of the importance of ingratiating a lady, who by every intellectual and personal quality and accomplishment, is better fitted than any other woman in England to form the heart and life of a great literary and political salon.

As to the subsidiary or accidental claim of being a poet, if it be true that Mr. Swinburne and Mr. William Morris would not accept the Laureateship, any other appointment but that which I am suggesting would be ridiculous; and a Government, even with a majority of 150, cannot afford to be ridiculous. No competent judge of poetry will maintain that any woman has

ever surpassed, if any woman has ever equalled, Mrs. Meynell as a poetess. I know that this is not only my opinion; it is that of men among my friends and acquaintance whose taste is of the rarest and finest; and the opinion of these men, expressed in private and public criticism, has already had such influence on the higher circle of readers that this lady's poems have gone through three editions, while a fourth is on the point of appearing.

There remain two other reasons for the expediency of the appointment I suggest. Mr. Traill has enumerated seventy-two living minor poets. I think he does not mention Mrs. Meynell; but he does me. Now every one of us thinks that he is the only possible Laureate, and I can assure Lord Salisbury that if he appoints any one but Mrs. Meynell, he will bring a fine nest of hornets about his head. We are nearly all of us more or less journalists, and, in the name of myself and my seventy-one brother journalists and poets, I can promise him that he will never hear the last of it, unless he silences us by nominating a Laureate whose sex at least will protect her and, indirectly, him from our stings.

Finally, what could be more graceful and opportune than that the reign of the best of Queens and the age in which woman's claims occupy the world's attention as they never did before, should be marked by an appointment which would be as expedient and popular as it would be just.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

COVENTRY PATMORE.

THE STORY OF FORMOSA.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

DEVIZES, 21 October, 1895.

SIR,—The annexation of Formosa will have consequences many and various: the natural resources of the island will be better developed; mines will be opened up, railways constructed, and commerce promoted. It may be hoped also that some one will be encouraged to write a book. The task might be commended, perhaps, to Mr. Dodd, of whose early experiences you spoke not long ago. The proceedings of the British Association comprised a paper from his pen—which will find hospitality in the next number of the Scottish Geographical Society's Journal; but the sketches of scenery, the "savage" skull, and a gospel in Romanized Pepowhan—which were displayed, also, for the edification of the audience—claim more elaborate notice than can be afforded in an address or even in the pages of a scientific review.

Du Halde has told us a good deal about Formosa in his great work; and I dropped accidentally, the other day, upon a little volume of "Receuil des Voyages, &c.," by Renneville, which contains some curious information. But it is in Holland that research might be most profitably made. The very existence of this gospel in Pepowhan shows that the Dutch occupation must have been more thorough than one might be led to surmise from its brevity and the somewhat legendary character of its traditions; and it is likely that other interesting records might be disinterred in the Government library and elsewhere, in Amsterdam.

It is curious, in the meantime, to note that the advent of the Dutch was associated with a transitory expedition by Japan. Hear Du Halde! In A.D. 1620 a Japanese squadron came upon the coast of Formosa. The commander, finding the country, though uncultivated, a place proper for settling a colony, resolved to seize upon it; and to that end left there a party of men with orders to get information necessary to the execution of his design. About the same time a Dutch vessel on her way to or from Japan was driven into Formosa; and her people, impressed apparently with the same conviction, asked permission to build a fort, stipulating only for so much ground as they could cover with an ox-hide. Permission given, they, of course, emulated Dido by cutting it into thongs. Disposed at first to be angry, the Japs ended by laughing at the trick; and this was the origin of Fort Zelandia, still known as the Dutch fort, near Anping.

Other accounts may lead one to surmise that the occupation was scarcely so fortuitous as might here appear. Renneville says it originated in the Pesca-